

# Charting the Higgs potential with pair-production of Higgs bosons at the ATLAS experiment

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TRIUMF, Canada's particle accelerator centre

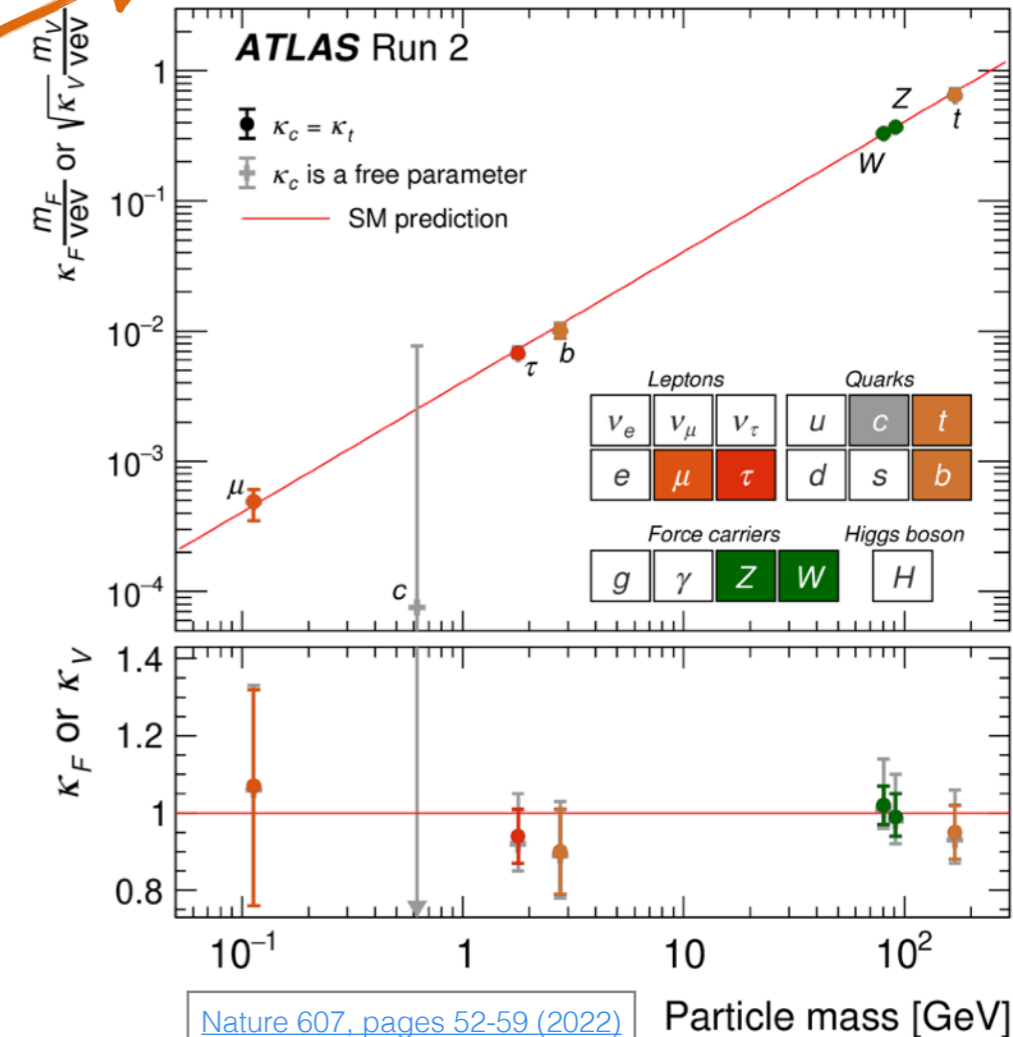
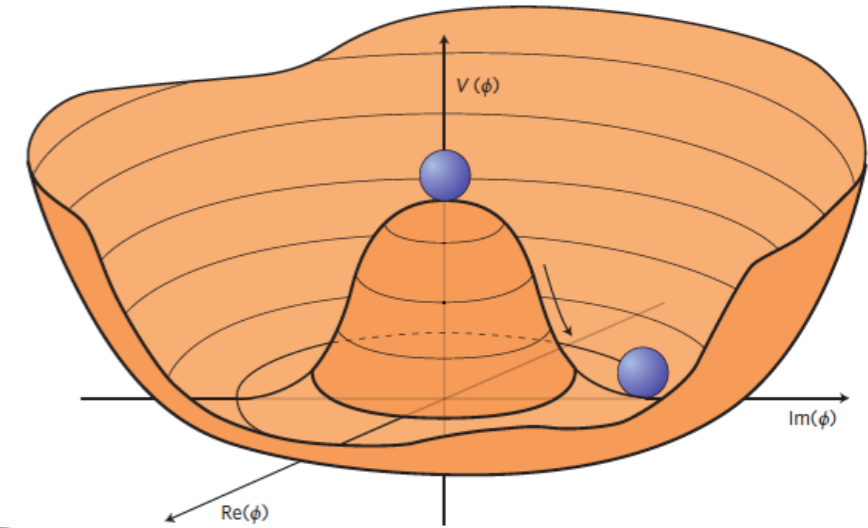
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# Introduction (1)

What is the Higgs boson and why its discovery (2012) was important

- Higgs boson: **massive scalar particle generated by the spontaneous breaking of the electroweak gauge symmetry.**
  - Ok... but what does this mean? 😊
    - Take the massless SM lagrangian  $\mathcal{L}^{SM}$ , add a scalar particle and a "a mexican hat" potential:
- $$V(\phi^\dagger\phi) = -\mu^2\phi^\dagger\phi + \lambda(\phi^\dagger\phi)^2$$
- Around the new potential minimum, electroweak bosons (W/Z) and fermions **acquire masses. A massive scalar appears** (the Higgs boson).
  - This works surprisingly well (so far)! **All observed couplings (W,Z,b,t, $\tau$ ) are consistent with the SM Higgs mechanism!**

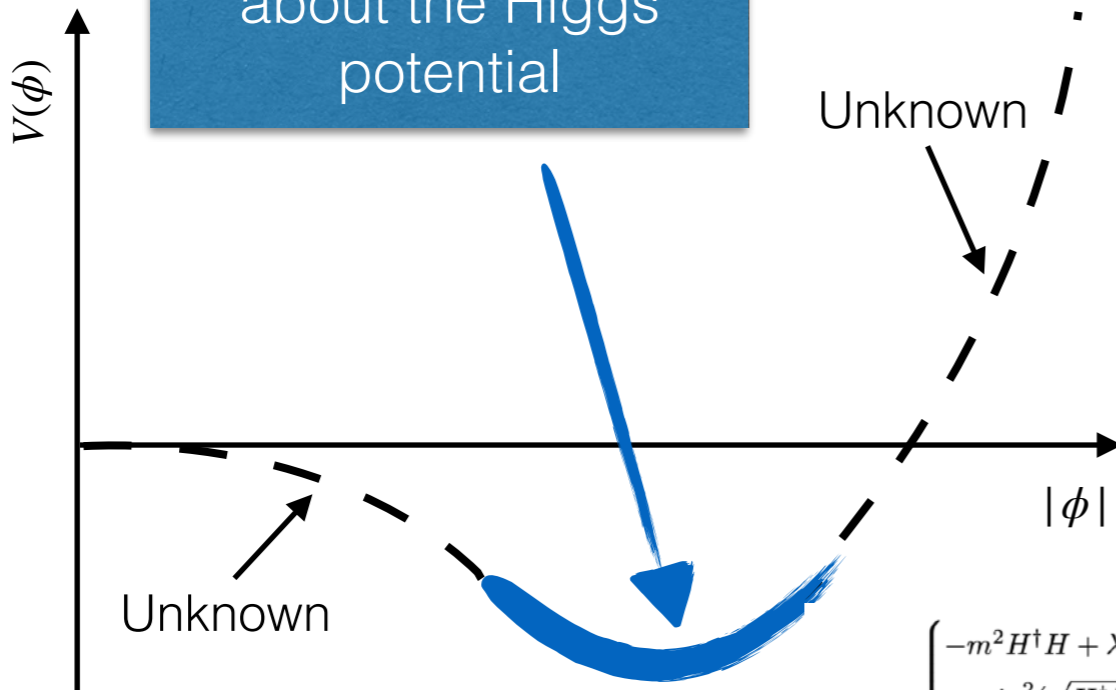


# Is this the end of the story?

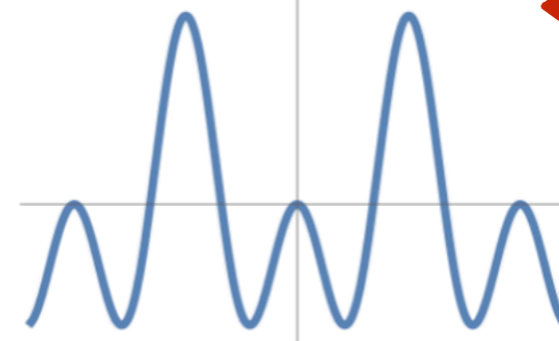
Have we understood everything about the Higgs?

- Simple answer: **No!**
- The simple existence of the Higgs in the SM is **really unique and puzzling:**
  - Are there **more Higgs bosons**?
  - Why is the **Higgs mass so small**?
  - Is it really a **Mexican hat potential shape or something else**?

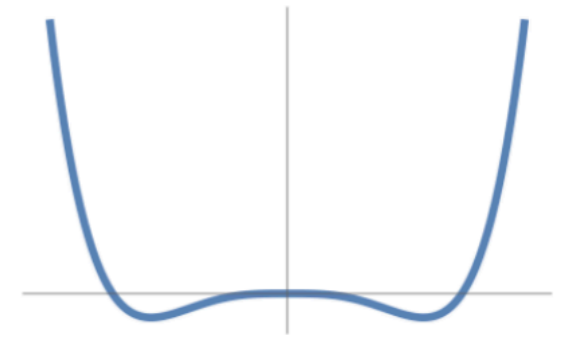
This is what we experimentally know about the Higgs potential



Many different potential shapes could explain the same physics we see today!



Nambu-Goldstone Higgs



Coleman-Weinberg Higgs

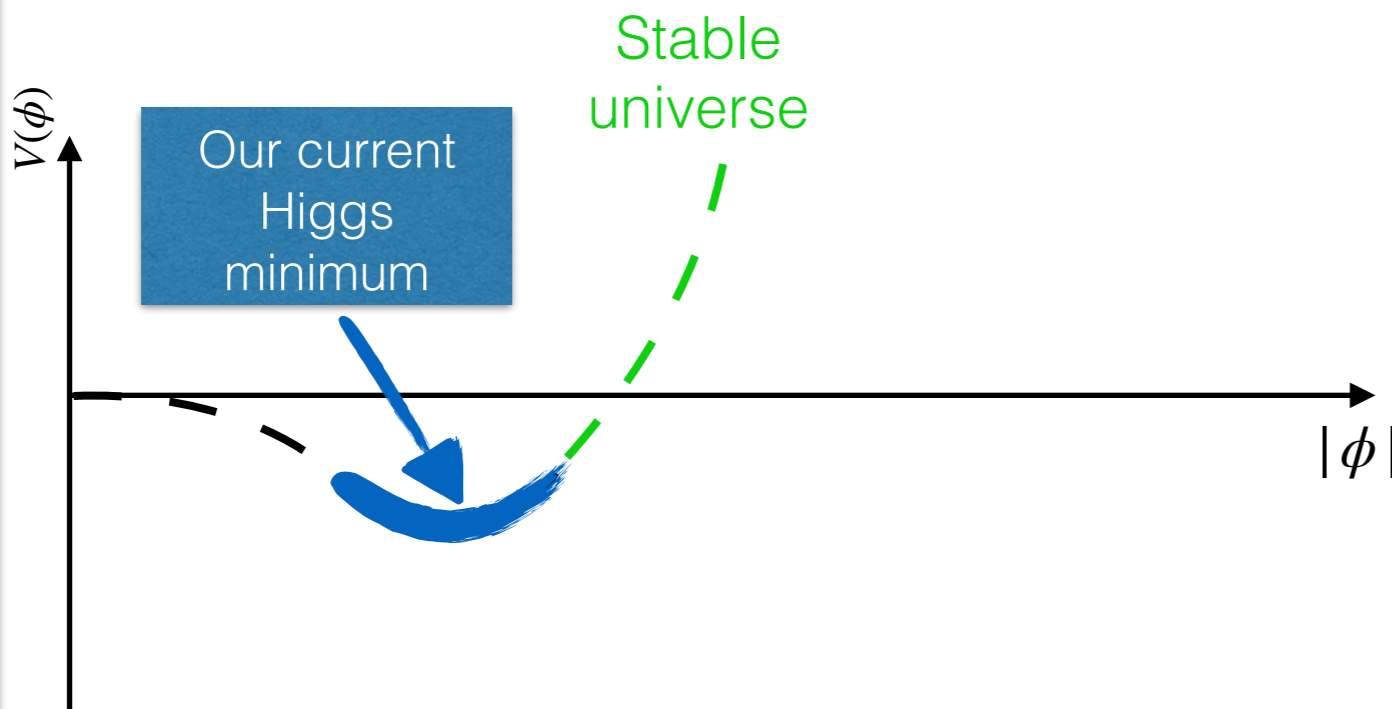
$$V(H) \simeq \begin{cases} -m^2 H^\dagger H + \lambda (H^\dagger H)^2 + \frac{c_6 \lambda}{\Lambda^2} (H^\dagger H)^3, & \text{Elementary Higgs} \\ -a \sin^2(\sqrt{H^\dagger H}/f) + b \sin^4(\sqrt{H^\dagger H}/f), & \text{Nambu-Goldstone Higgs} \\ \lambda (H^\dagger H)^2 + \epsilon (H^\dagger H)^2 \log \frac{H^\dagger H}{\mu^2}, & \text{Coleman-Weinberg Higgs} \\ -\kappa^3 \sqrt{H^\dagger H} + m^2 H^\dagger H, & \text{Tadpole-induced Higgs} \end{cases}$$

[arxiv:1907.02078](https://arxiv.org/abs/1907.02078)

# The Higgs potential in the history of the universe

Electroweak baryogenesis and vacuum metastability

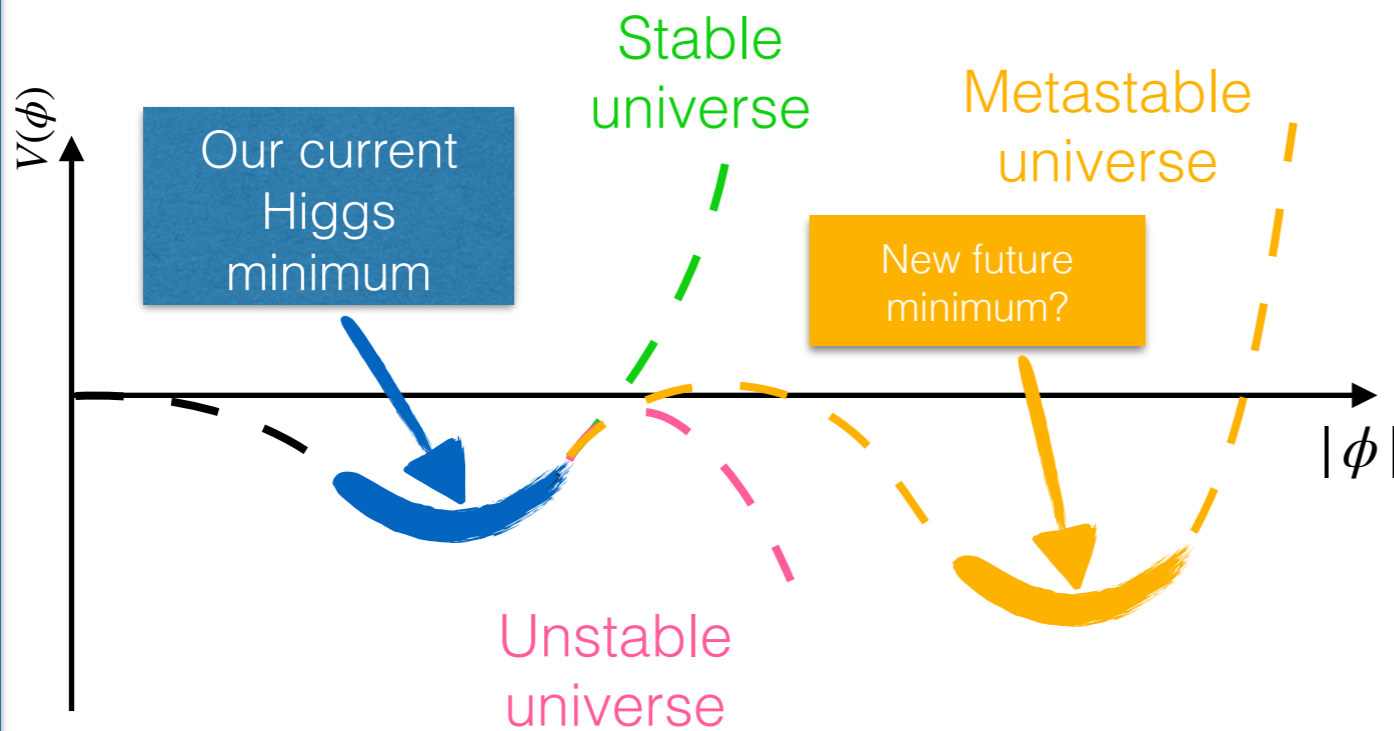
- The Higgs potential is **deeply related to the baryogenesis problem**.
  - A **potential shape beyond the SM could explain** the overabundance of matter in the universe (EWK baryogenesis)!
- Also, important question about the **stability of our current universe vacuum state!**



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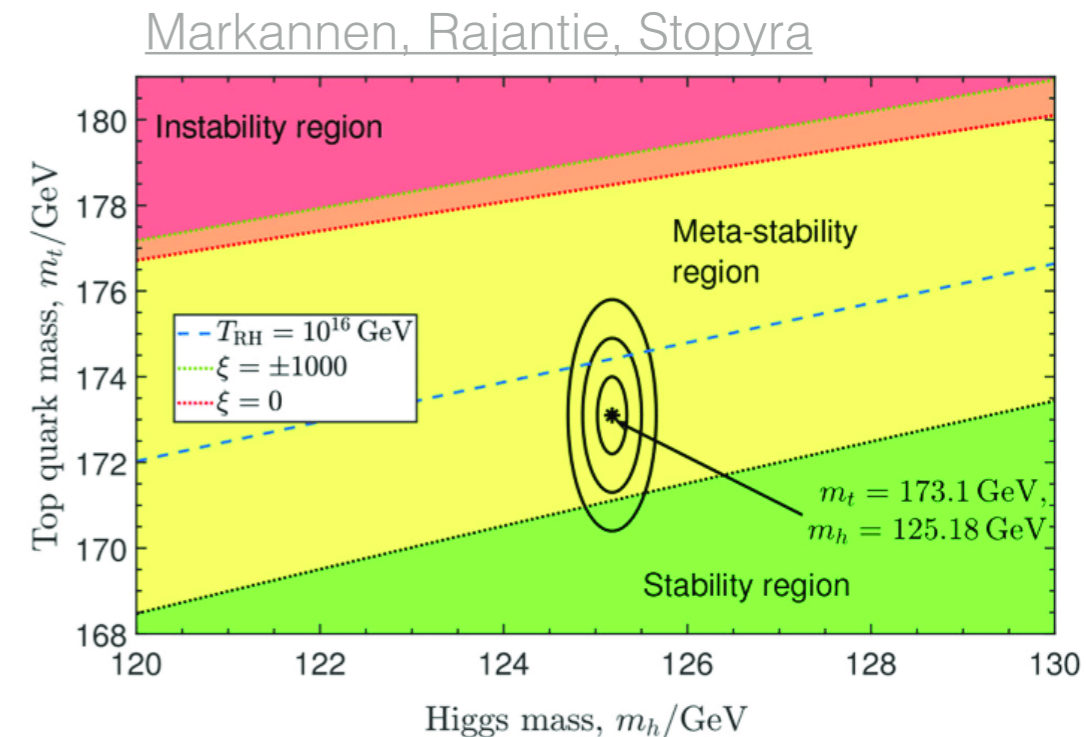
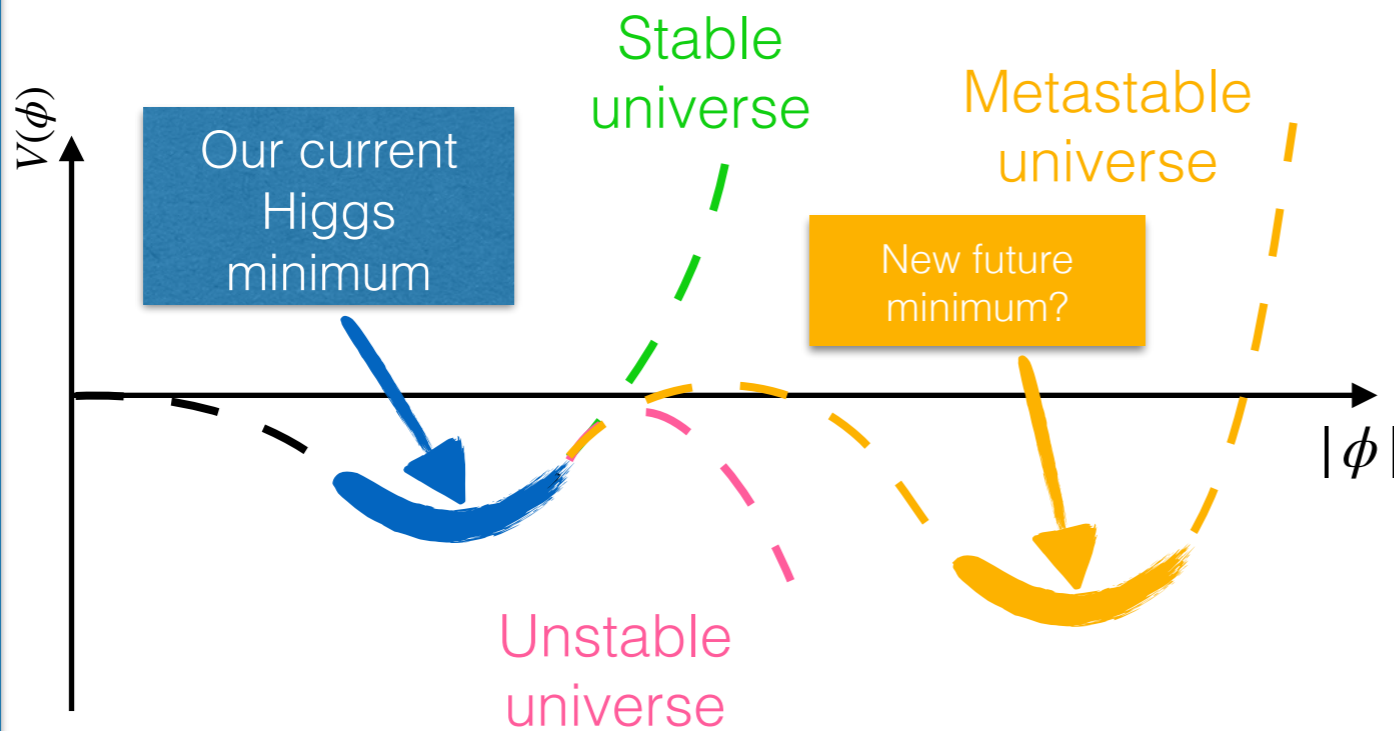
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# The Higgs potential in the history of the universe

Electroweak baryogenesis and vacuum metastability

- The Higgs potential is **deeply related to the baryogenesis problem**.
  - A **potential shape beyond the SM could explain** the overabundance of matter in the universe (EWK baryogenesis)!
- Also, important question about the **stability of our current universe vacuum state!**



Current measurements suggest that we live in a **metastable** universe that will decay in future!



Measuring **the Higgs potential** is **critical** to fully understand how **the universe started...** and also how it will **finish.**

But so... **how can we measure the  
Higgs potential?**



# How to measure the Higgs potential

Multiple-Higgs events

We need to access the  $\lambda$  parameter of the Higgs potential.

$$V(h) = -\mu^2 |\phi|^2 + \lambda |\phi|^4 \simeq \frac{1}{2} m_h^2 h^2 + \lambda v h^3 + \frac{1}{4} \lambda h^4 + \dots$$



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Tells us where the minimum of the potential is  
 $\Rightarrow m_H = \sqrt{2\lambda} v \approx 125 \text{ GeV}$  means  $\lambda_{SM} \approx 0.13$



# How to measure the Higgs potential

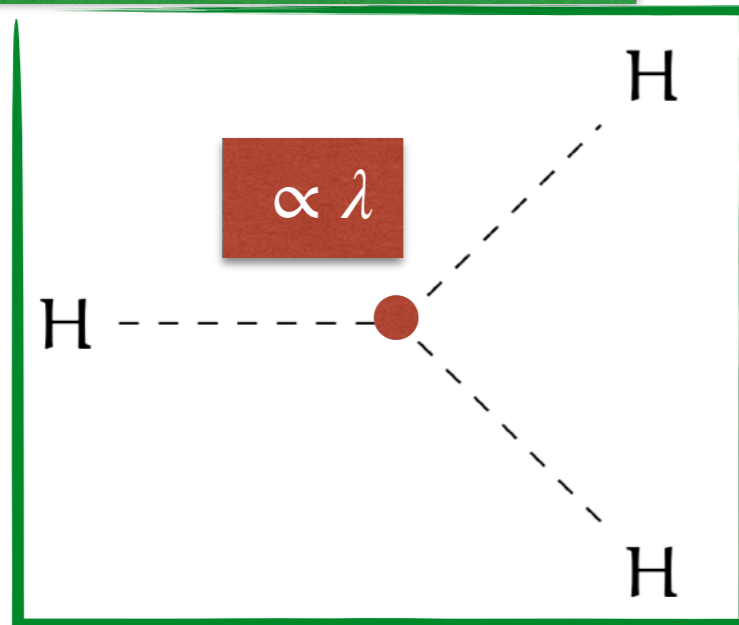
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Trilinear Higgs self-coupling



Access to  $\lambda$  through **3-Higgs interactions**

We generally look more at  $\kappa_\lambda$  rather than  $\lambda$  directly

$$\kappa_\lambda \equiv \frac{\lambda}{\lambda_{SM}}$$



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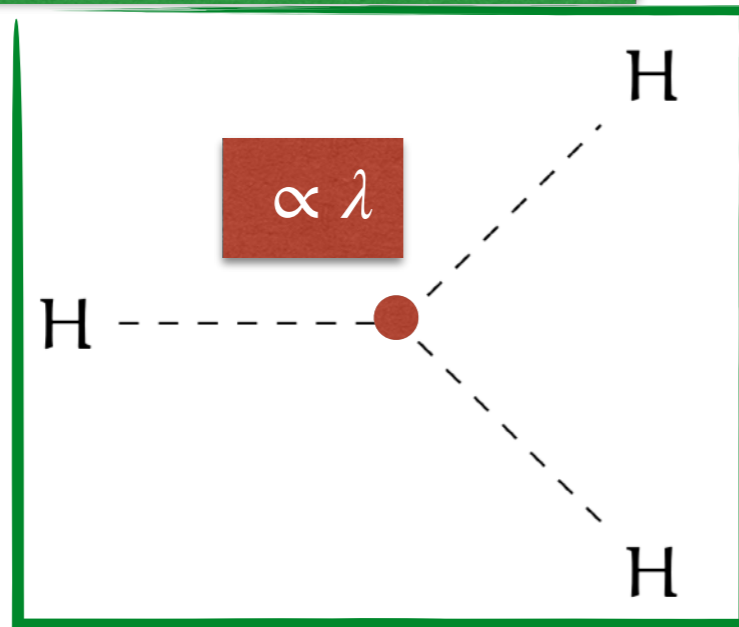
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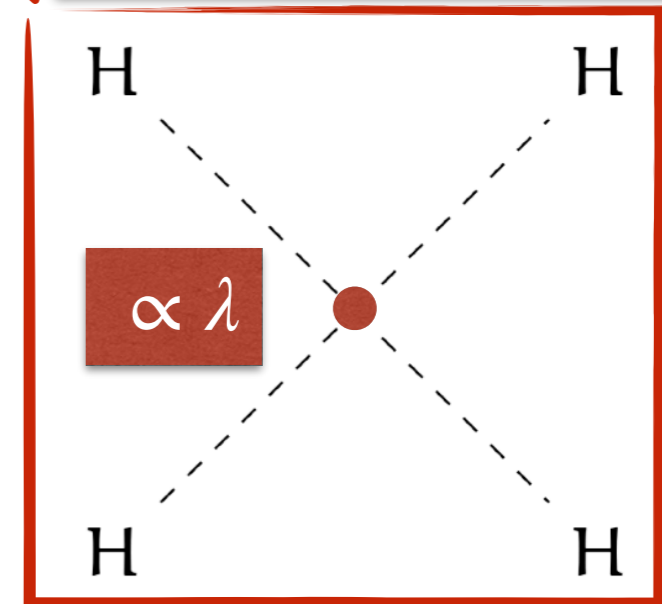
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Trilinear Higgs self-coupling



Access to  $\lambda$  through **3-Higgs interactions**

Quadrilinear Higgs self-coupling



Out of the reach of (HL)-LHC (and even most of future collider scenarios)

We generally look more at  $\kappa_\lambda$  rather than  $\lambda$  directly

$$\kappa_\lambda \equiv \frac{\lambda}{\lambda_{SM}}$$



# HH production at the LHC

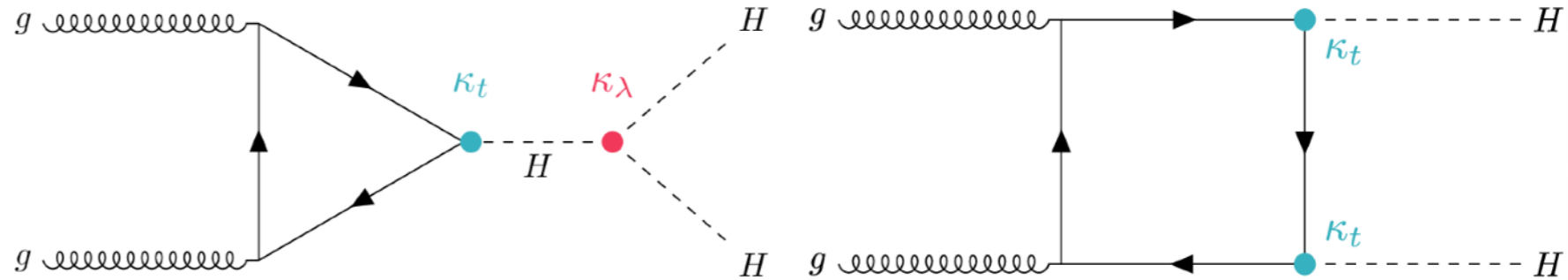
Non-resonant HH production

## Gluon-gluon fusion (ggF)

### Triangle diagram

### Box diagram

- Destructive interference leads to small cross-section:

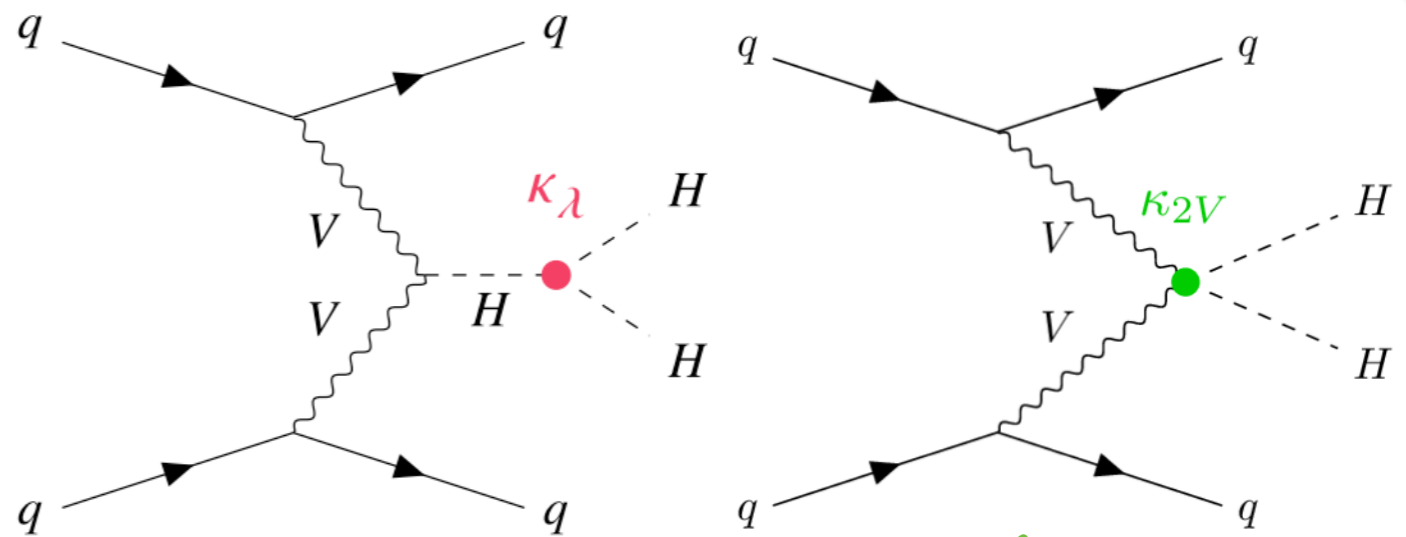


$$\sigma_{ggF} = 31.05 \text{ fb}$$

1 HH event every 1000 single-H events!

## Vector-boson fusion (VBF)

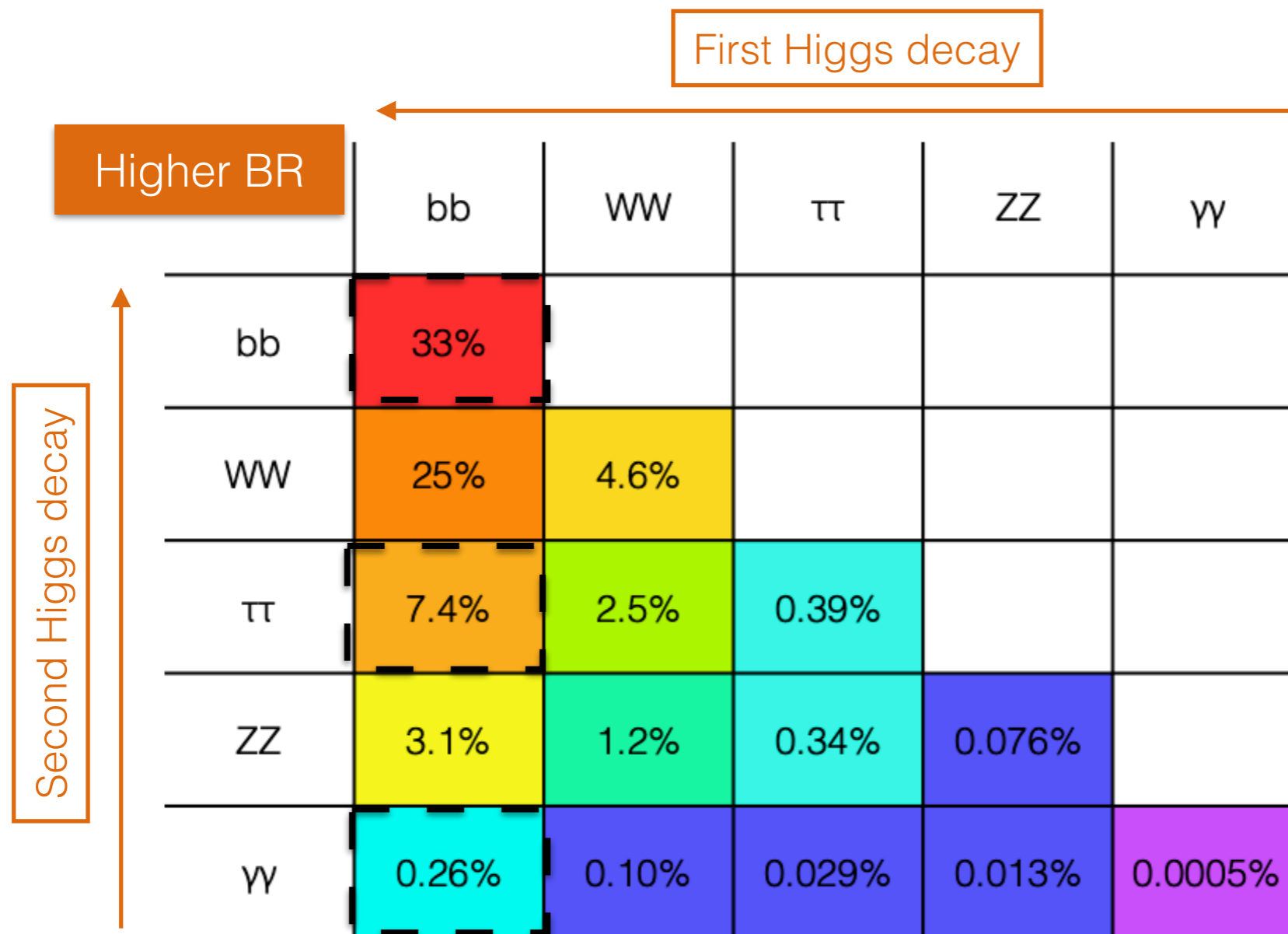
- Signature: 2 Higgs + 2 quarks close to the LHC proton beams.
- Access to  $\kappa_\lambda$ , but also to **VVHH process** (never measured!) which could provide test of **SM unitarity** via measurement of  $k_{2V}$ .
- **Very tiny** cross-section:  
 $\sigma_{VBF} = 1.72 \text{ fb}$



$$\kappa_{2V} \equiv \frac{c_{2V}}{c_{2V}^{SM}}$$

# The HH final states

- With  $\sigma(HH) \approx 31 \text{ fb}$  and  $\mathcal{L}^{int} = 139 \text{ fb}^{-1}$ , **~4k HH events produced** in the LHC Run 2.
  - **Maximal sensitivity requires multiple analysis channels** targeting different decays.

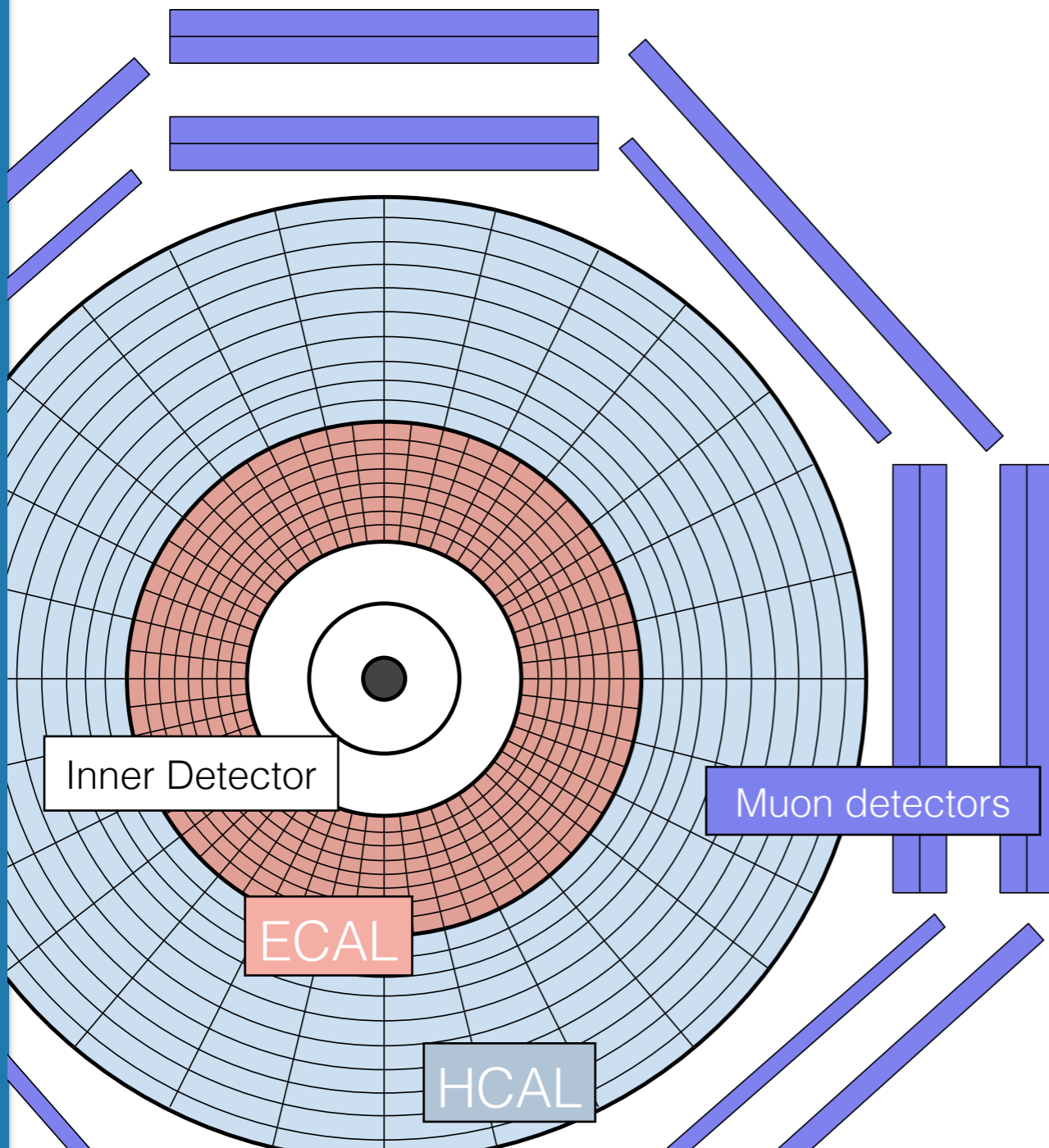


Most sensitive ATLAS channels covered in this talk.

# **HH detection at ATLAS**

# HH final state reconstruction

To observe  $HH$  decaying to  $b\bar{b}b\bar{b}$ ,  $b\bar{b}\tau^+\tau^-$ ,  $b\bar{b}\gamma\gamma$  channels we need to identify b-quarks,  $\tau$ -leptons and photons.

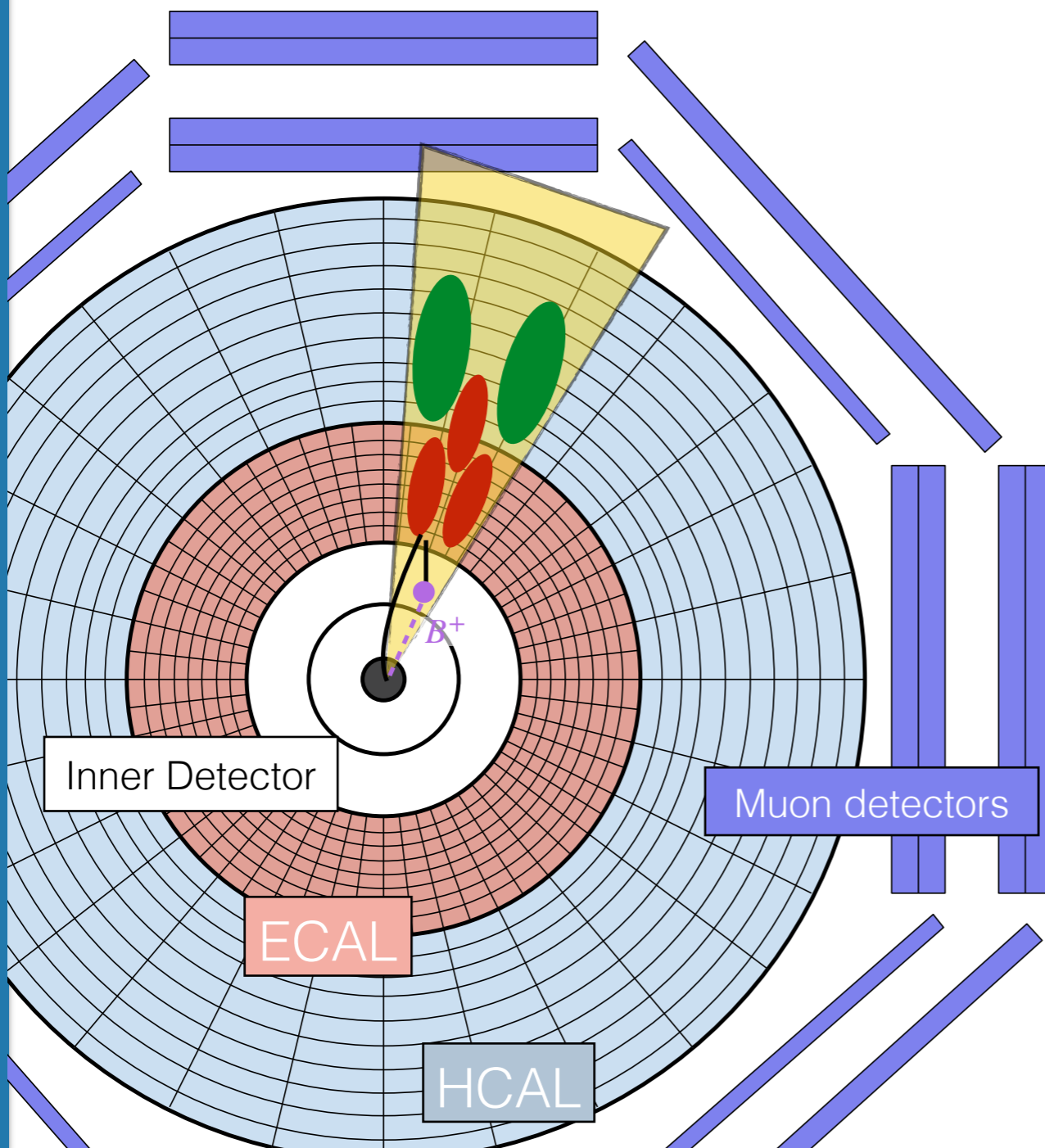




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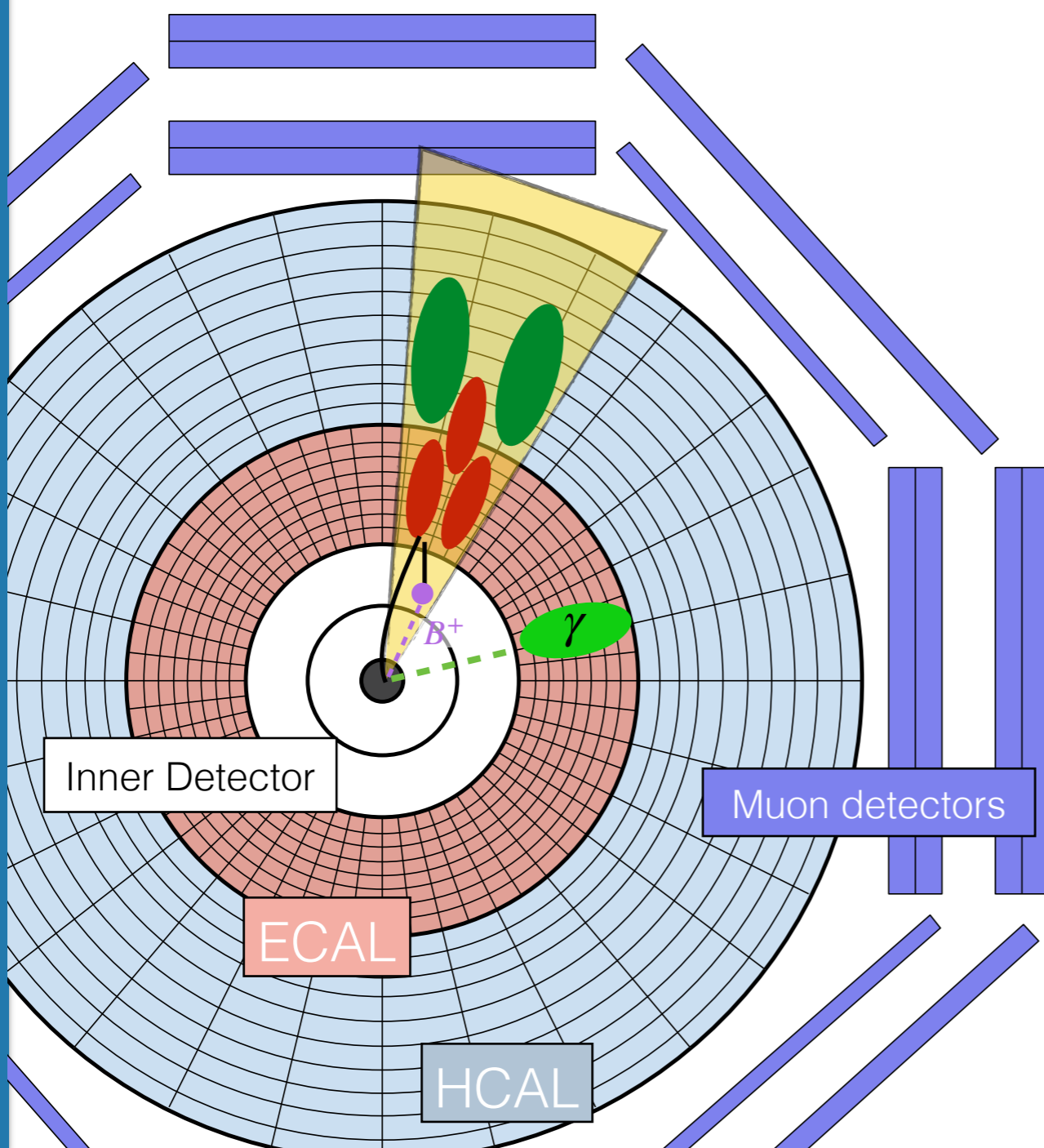
- b-jets: collimated **spray of particles** containing a **displaced vertex** (B-hadron decay).
- Machine Learning **b-tagging algorithms** for identification.



# HH final state reconstruction

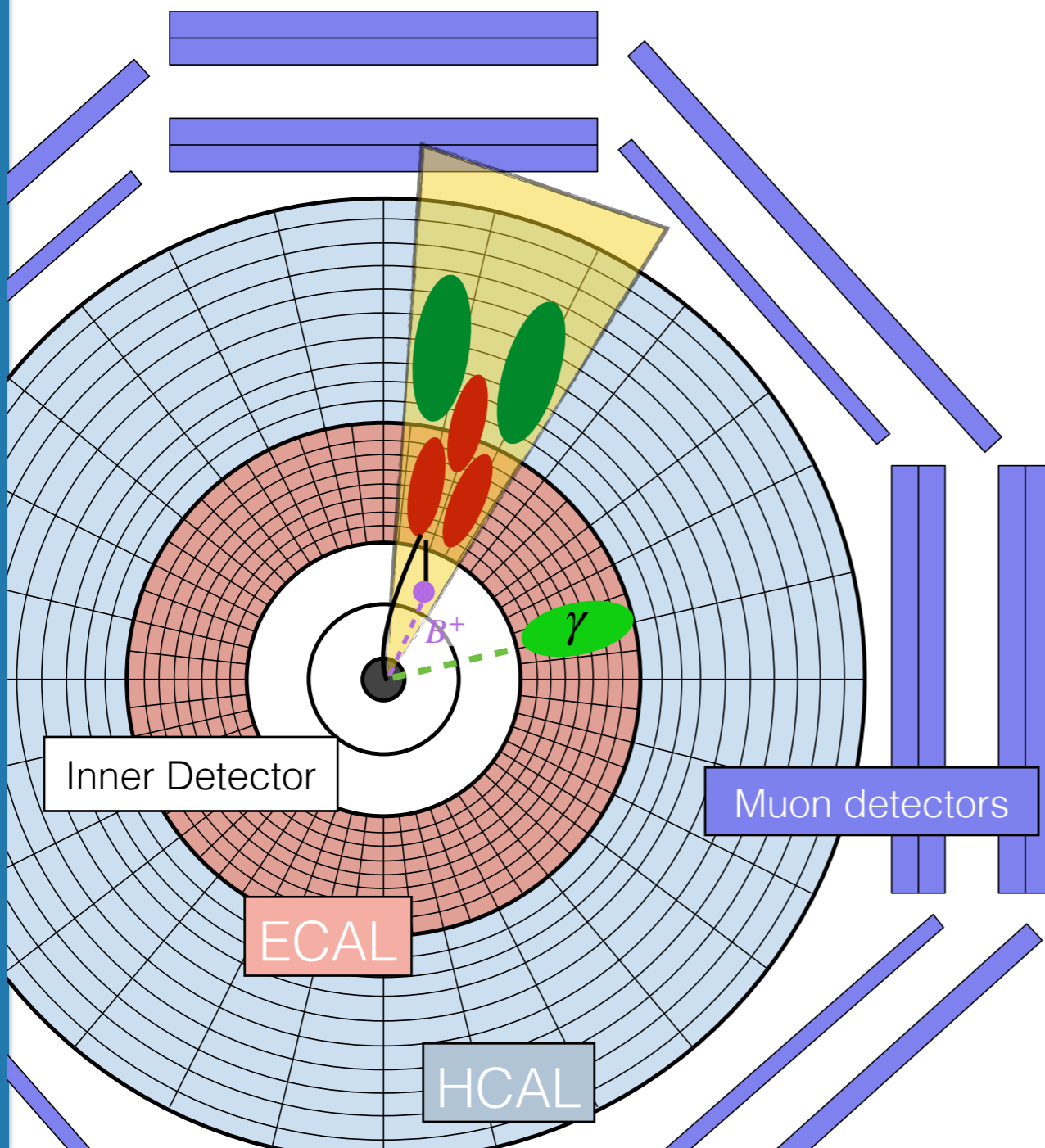
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- b-jets: collimated **spray of particles** containing a **displaced vertex** (B-hadron decay).
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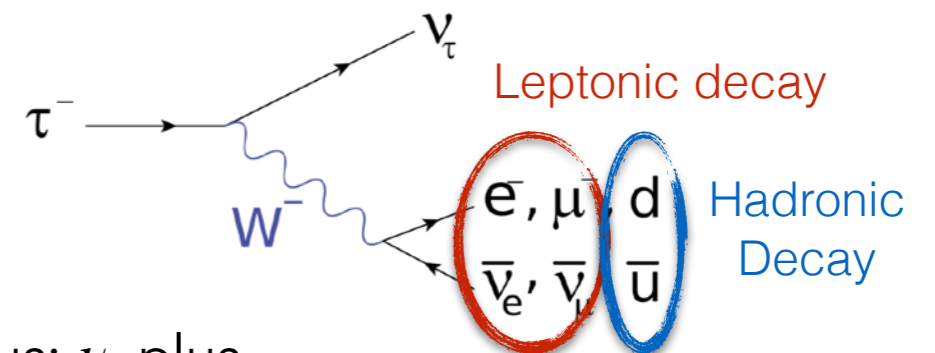


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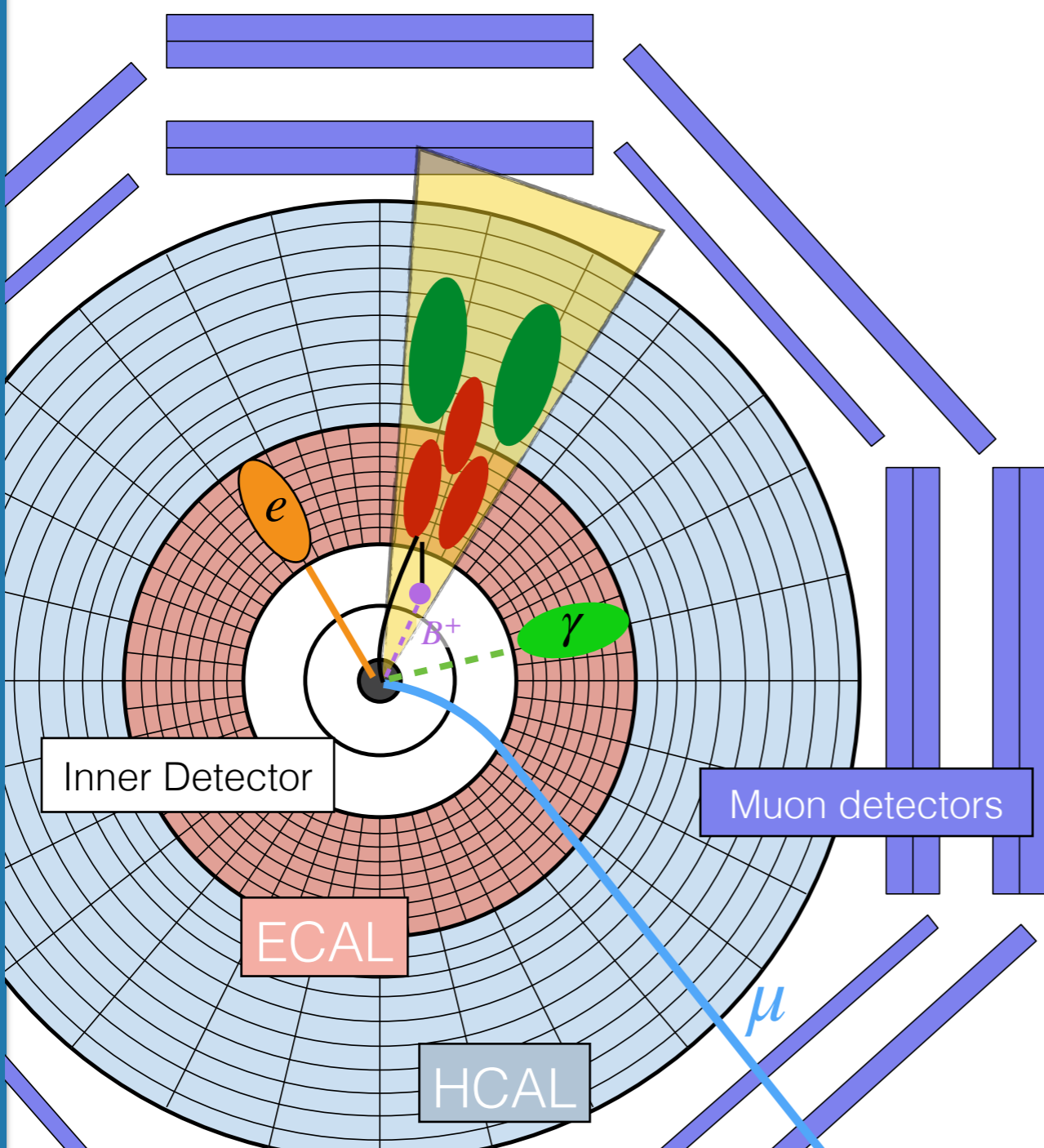
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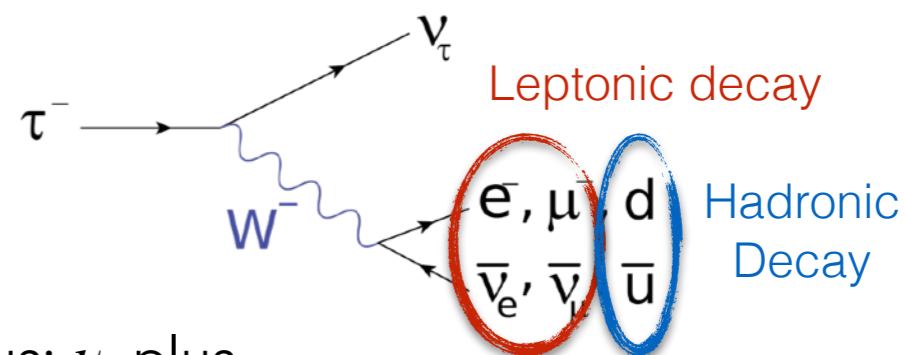
- Taus:  $\nu_\tau$  plus
  1. Hadronic  $\tau$  ( $\tau_{\text{had}}$ ): **jet** with low number of tracks identified with  $\tau$  tagger.
  2. Leptonic  $\tau$  ( $\tau_{\text{lep}}$ ): **muon** ( $\mu$ ) or **electron** ( $e$ )

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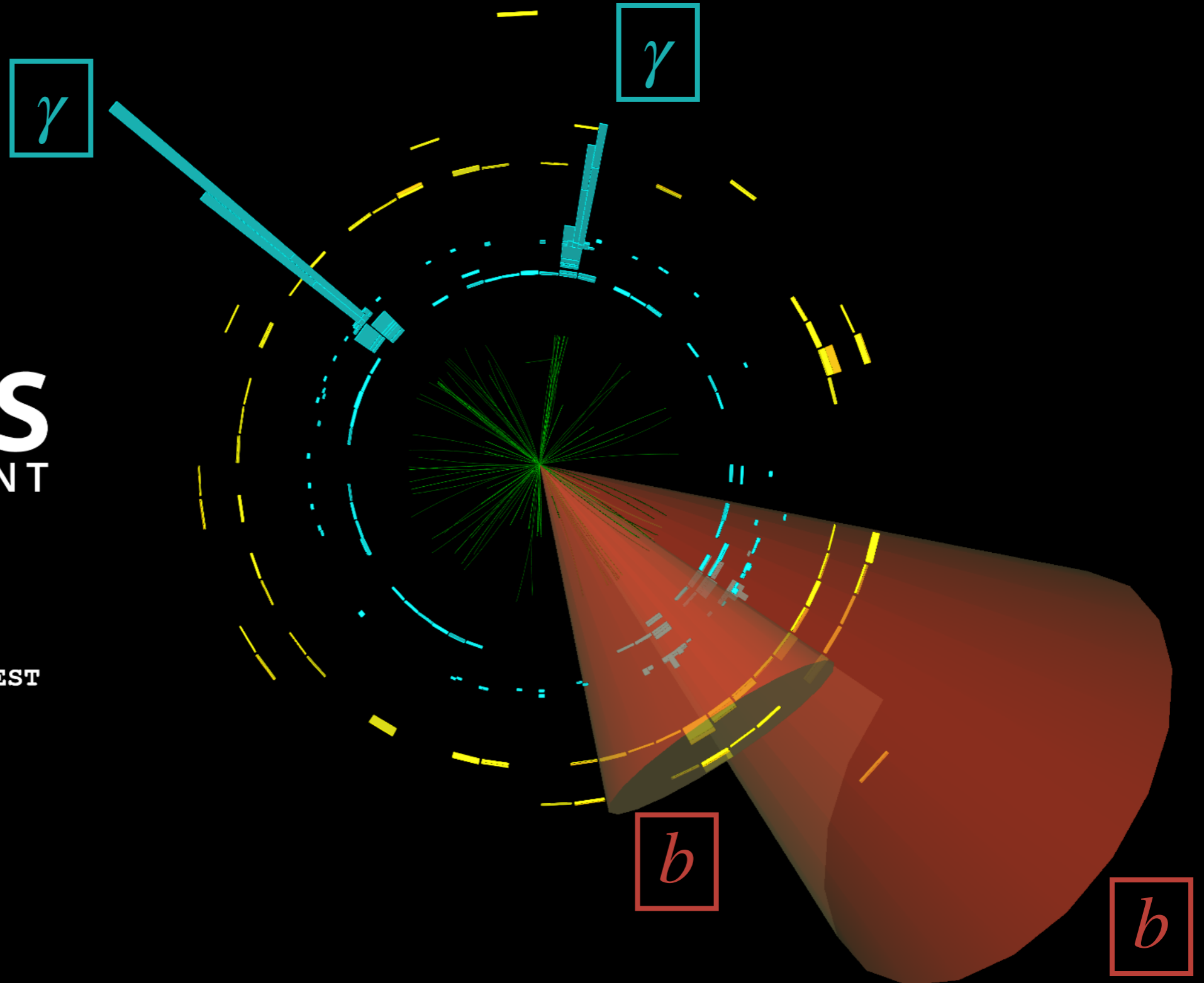
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# $HH \rightarrow b\bar{b}\gamma\gamma$ analysis ( $139 \text{ fb}^{-1}$ )

JHEP 01 (2024) 066



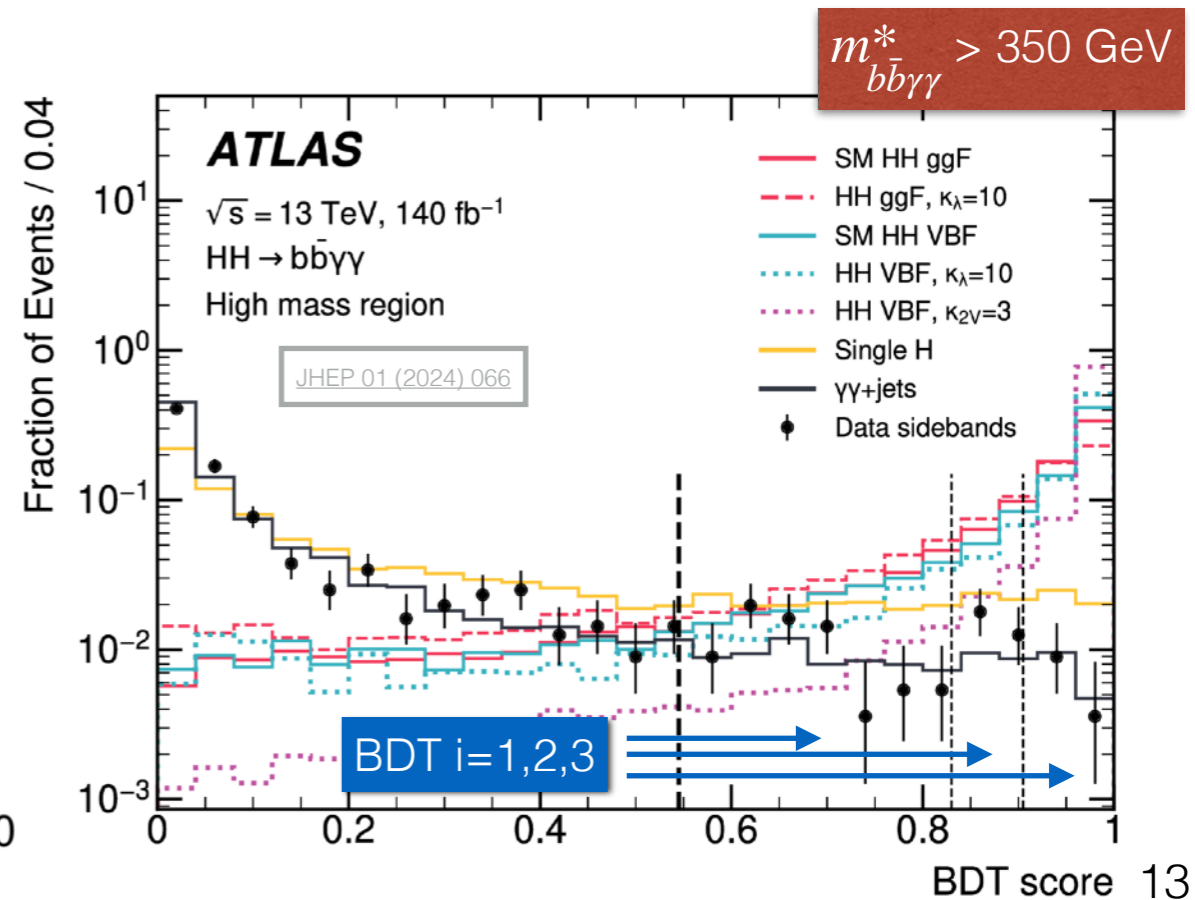
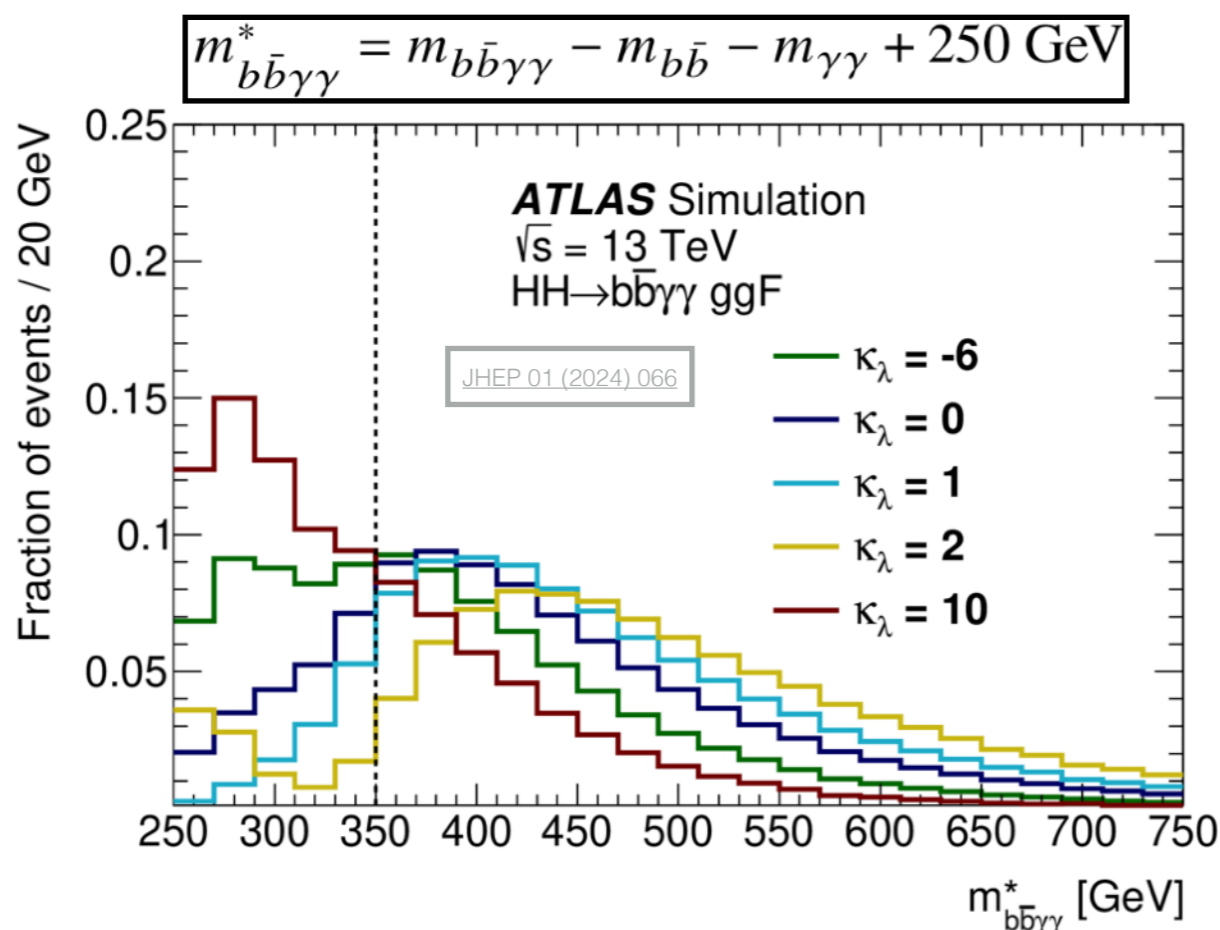
Run: 329964  
Event: 796155578  
2017-07-17 23:58:15 CEST



# $HH \rightarrow b\bar{b}\gamma\gamma$ analysis (1)

Analysis selection and categories

- **Very tiny HH BR (0.26%), but excellent acceptance ( $\gamma\gamma$  triggers) and low backgrounds.**
- Selection: 2 photons + 2 b-jets (77% eff.)
  - **BDTs used** to separate backgrounds and signals.
- Categories: 7 regions split in  $m_{b\bar{b}\gamma\gamma}^*$  (350 GeV) and BDT output to enhance sensitivity to signal.

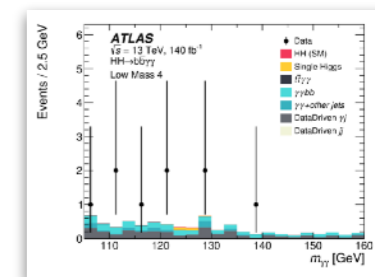
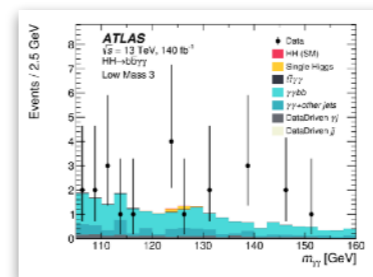
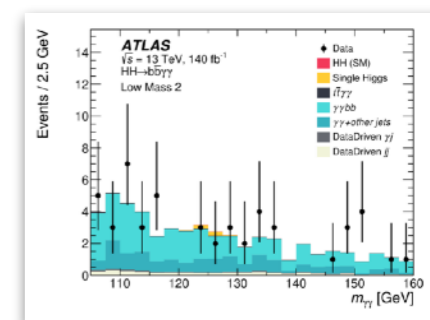
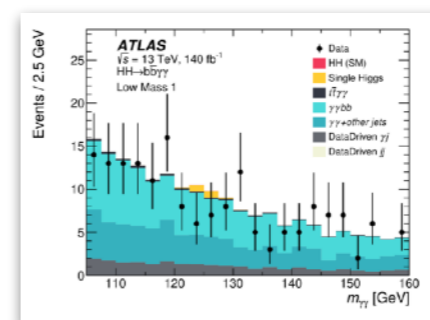
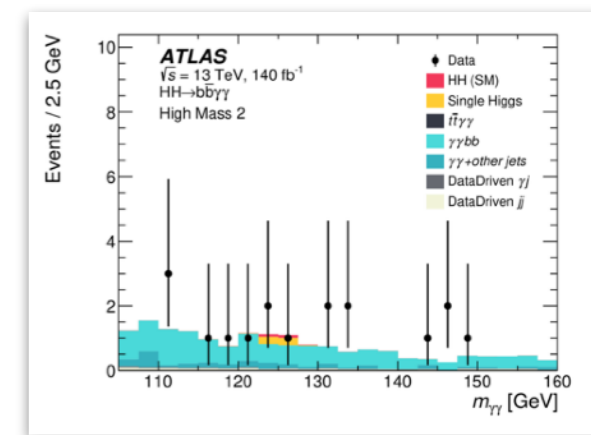
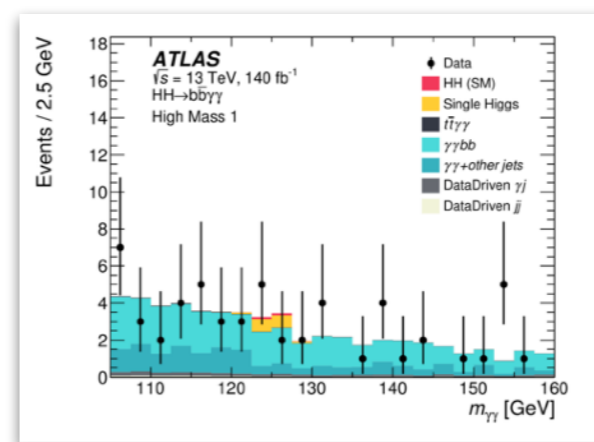
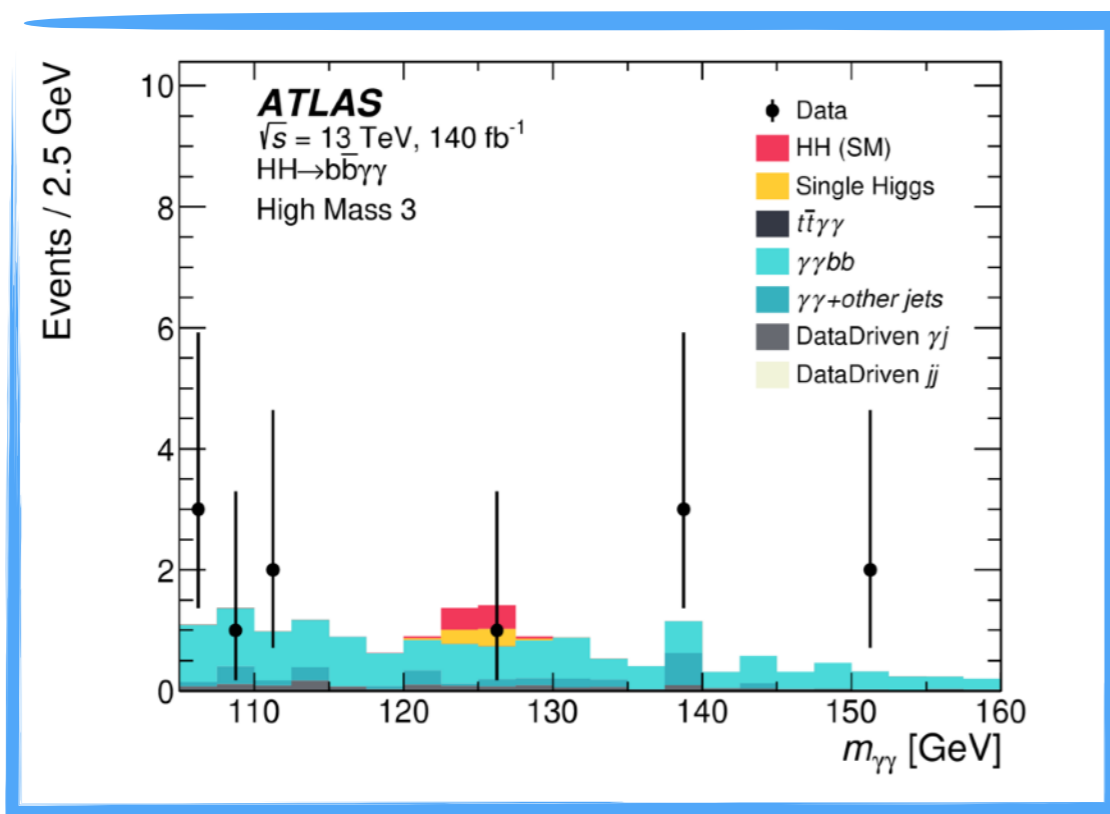


# $HH \rightarrow b\bar{b}\gamma\gamma$ analysis (2)

Background estimation and results

Final observation: **simultaneous likelihood fit of  $m_{\gamma\gamma}$  in 7 categories.**

- Main backgrounds:  $\gamma\gamma$  + **jets** and **SM  $H \rightarrow \gamma\gamma$** .



JHEP 01 (2024) 066

- **No significant excess** above SM prediction.

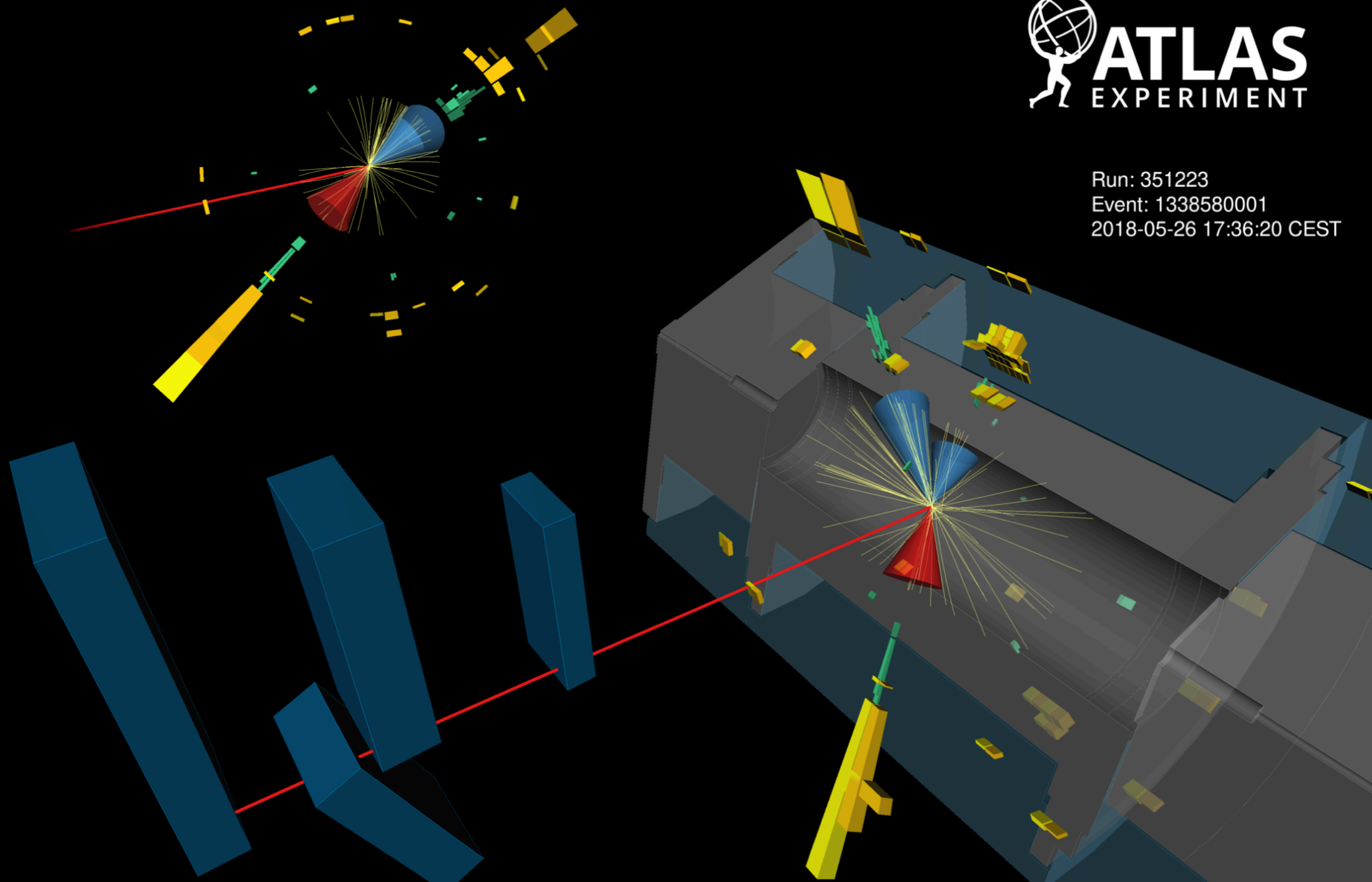


# $HH \rightarrow b\bar{b}\tau^+\tau^-$ analysis ( $139 \text{ fb}^{-1}$ )

arXiv:2404.12660



Run: 351223  
Event: 1338580001  
2018-05-26 17:36:20 CEST



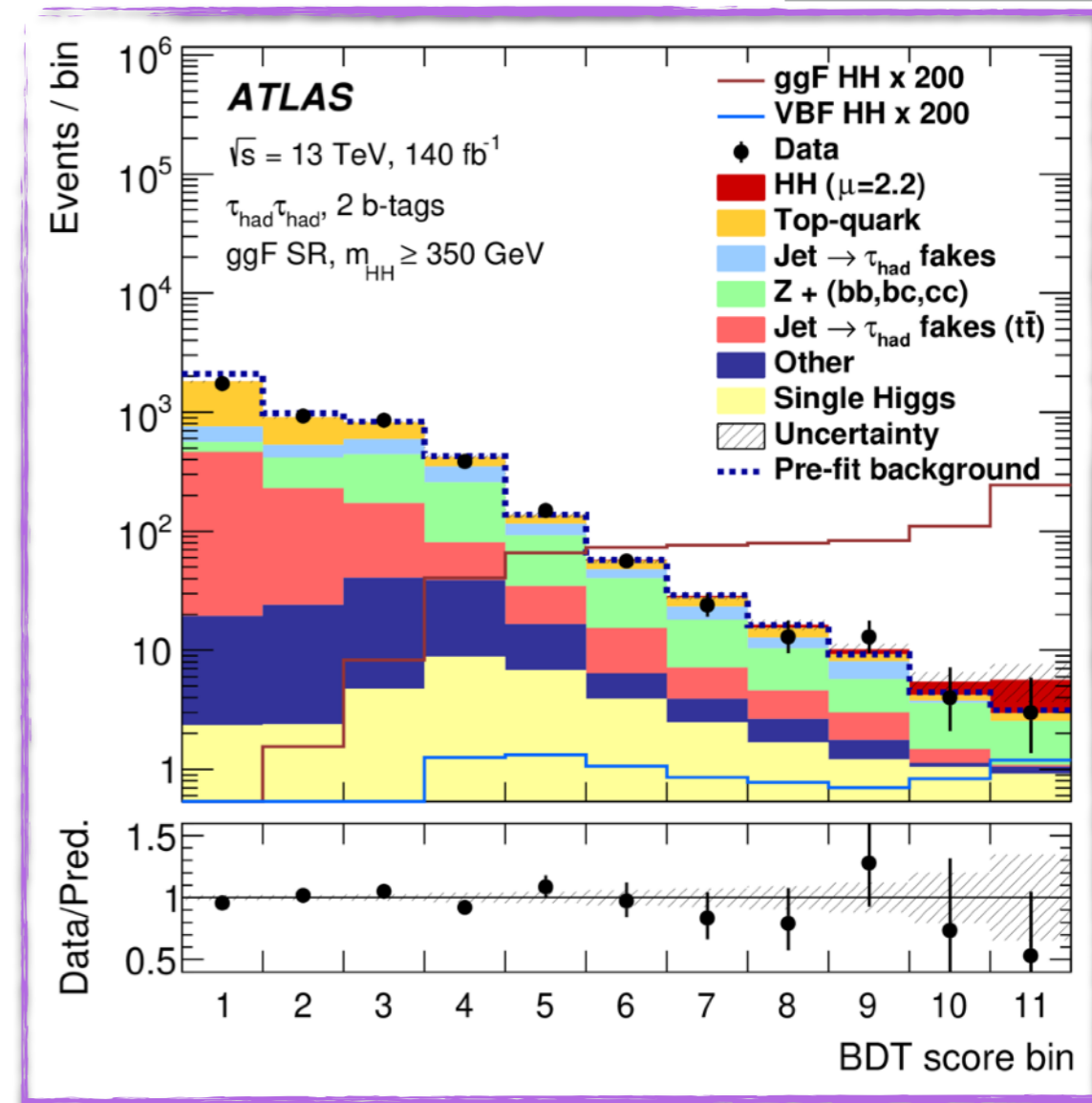


# $HH \rightarrow b\bar{b}\tau\tau$ analysis (1)

Event selection and analysis categories

- **Good trade between HH BR (7.3%) and moderate background.**
- Selection: 2 b-jets (77% eff.) and 2  $\tau$ -leptons ( $\tau_{\text{had}}$  and  $\tau_{\text{lep}}$ )
  - **9 categories:** split in  $\tau$  decay mode (had-had, lep-had) and HH production mode (ggF VBF).
- **BDT outputs in categories are simultaneously fit** to separate background and signals.
- No significant excess observed.

arXiv:2404.12660



+8 categories

# $HH \rightarrow b\bar{b}b\bar{b}$ analysis ( $126 \text{ fb}^{-1}$ )

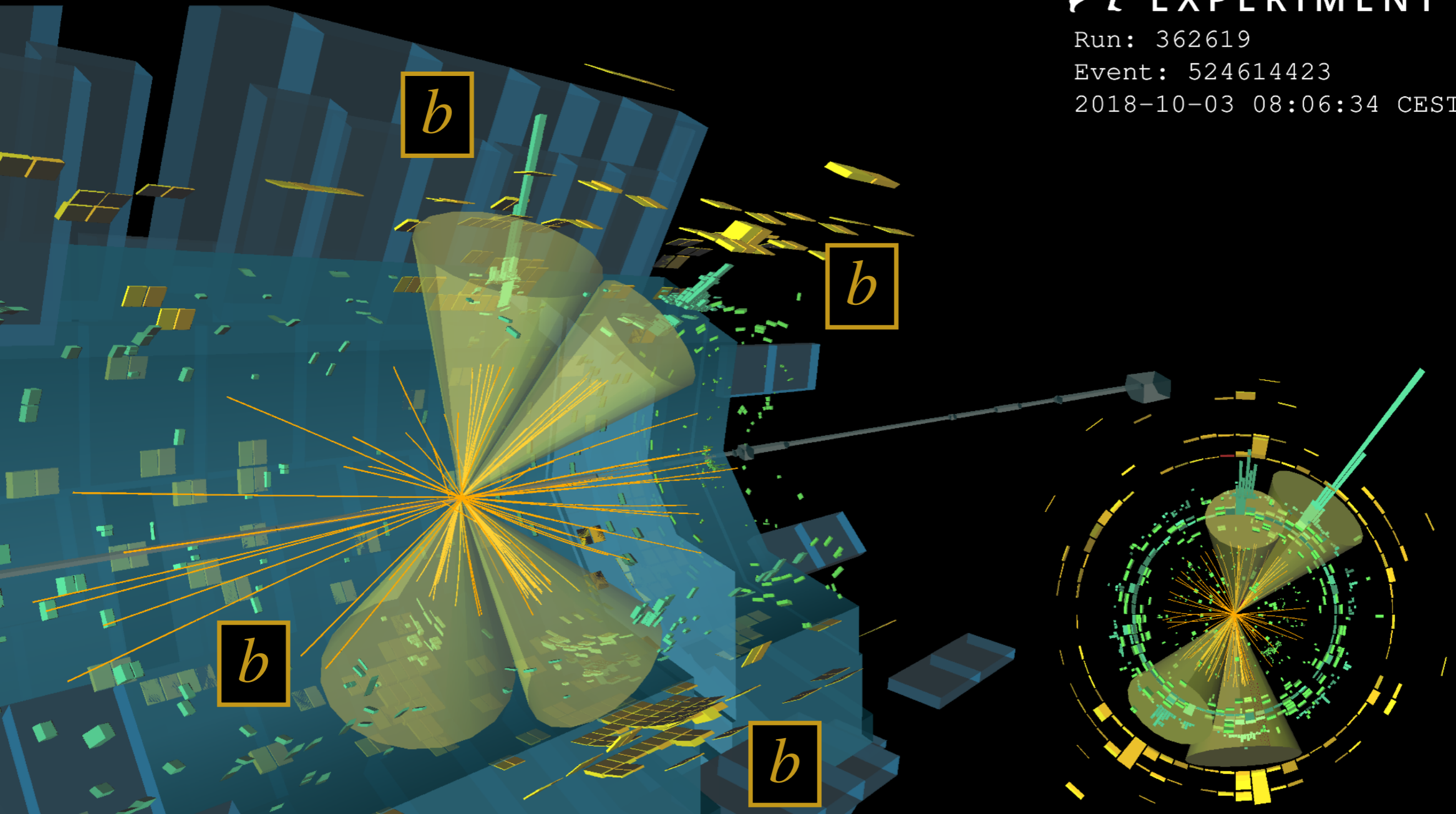
Phys. Rev. D 105 (2022) 092002



Run: 362619

Event: 524614423

2018-10-03 08:06:34 CEST

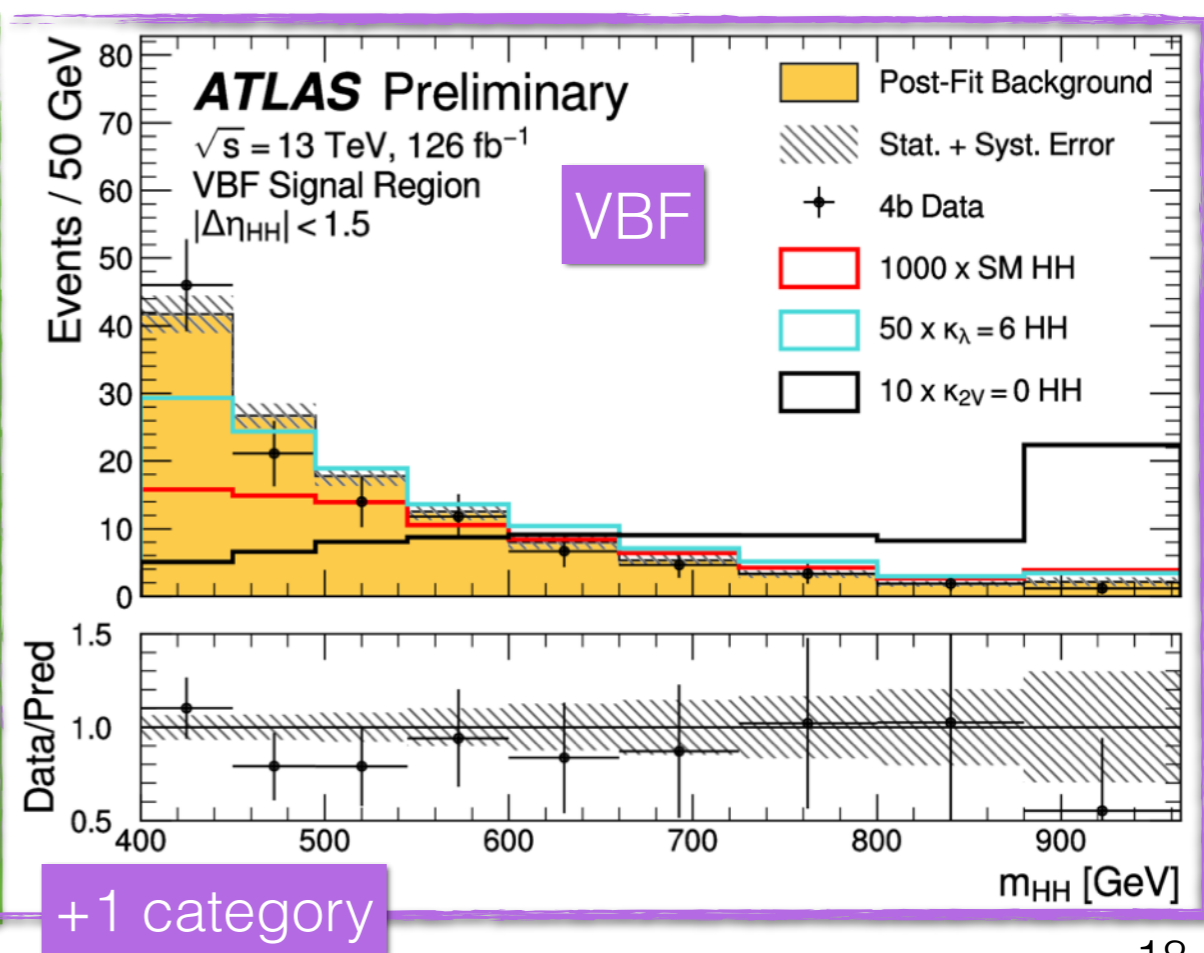
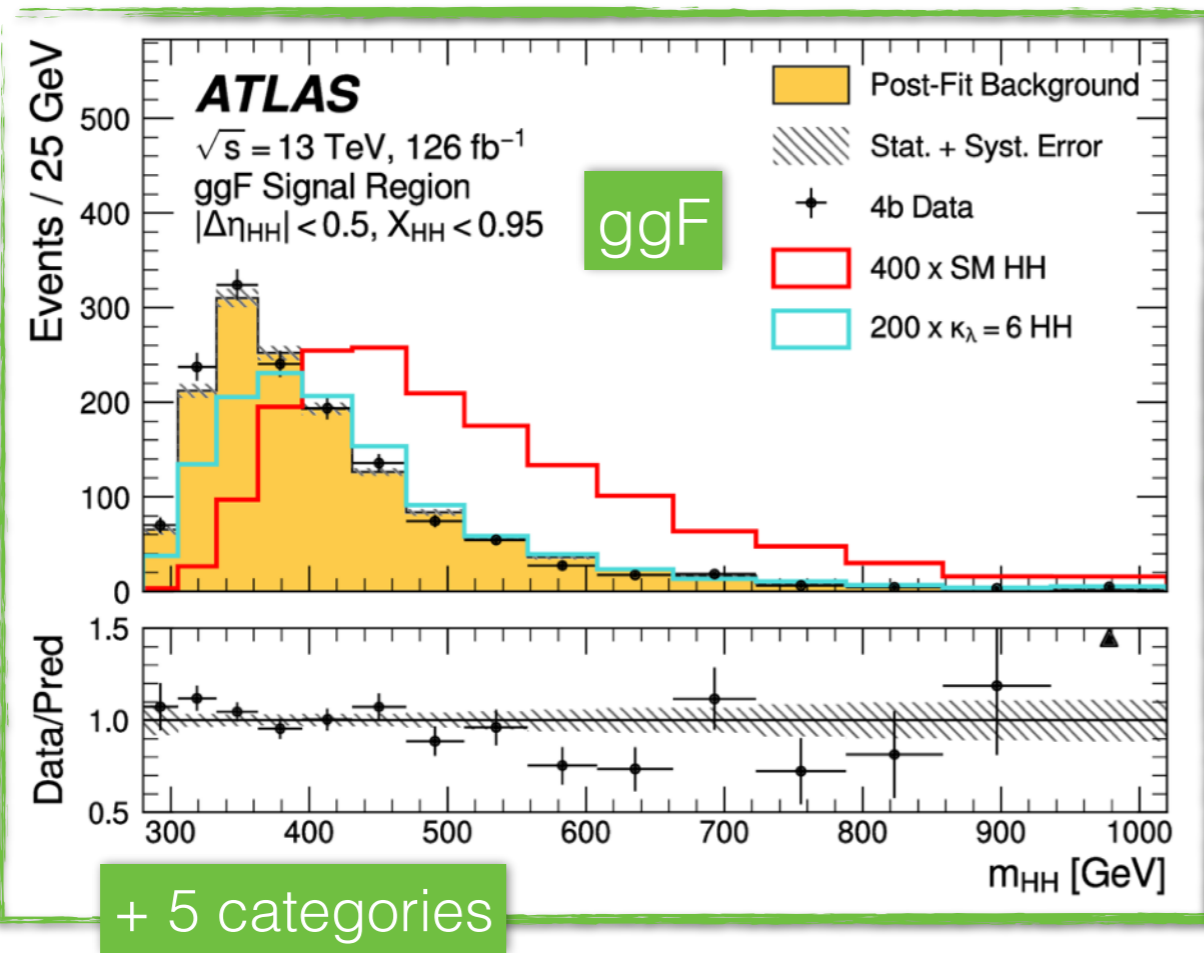


# $HH \rightarrow b\bar{b}b\bar{b}$ analysis (1)

Selection and analysis categories

- **Largest HH BR (34%),** but **large multi-jet background** and challenging jet-pairing combinatorics.
- Selection: at least **4 b-jets** (77% eff.)
  - VBF selection: **two additional jets** close to the beam ( $|\Delta\eta_{jj}| > 3$ ).
- Background estimation: fully data-driven with machine-learning-assisted ABCD method.
- Categories: **6 for ggF** and **2 for VBF** to enhance signal sensitivity.
- **No significant excess** observed.

Phys. Rev. D 105 (2022) 092002

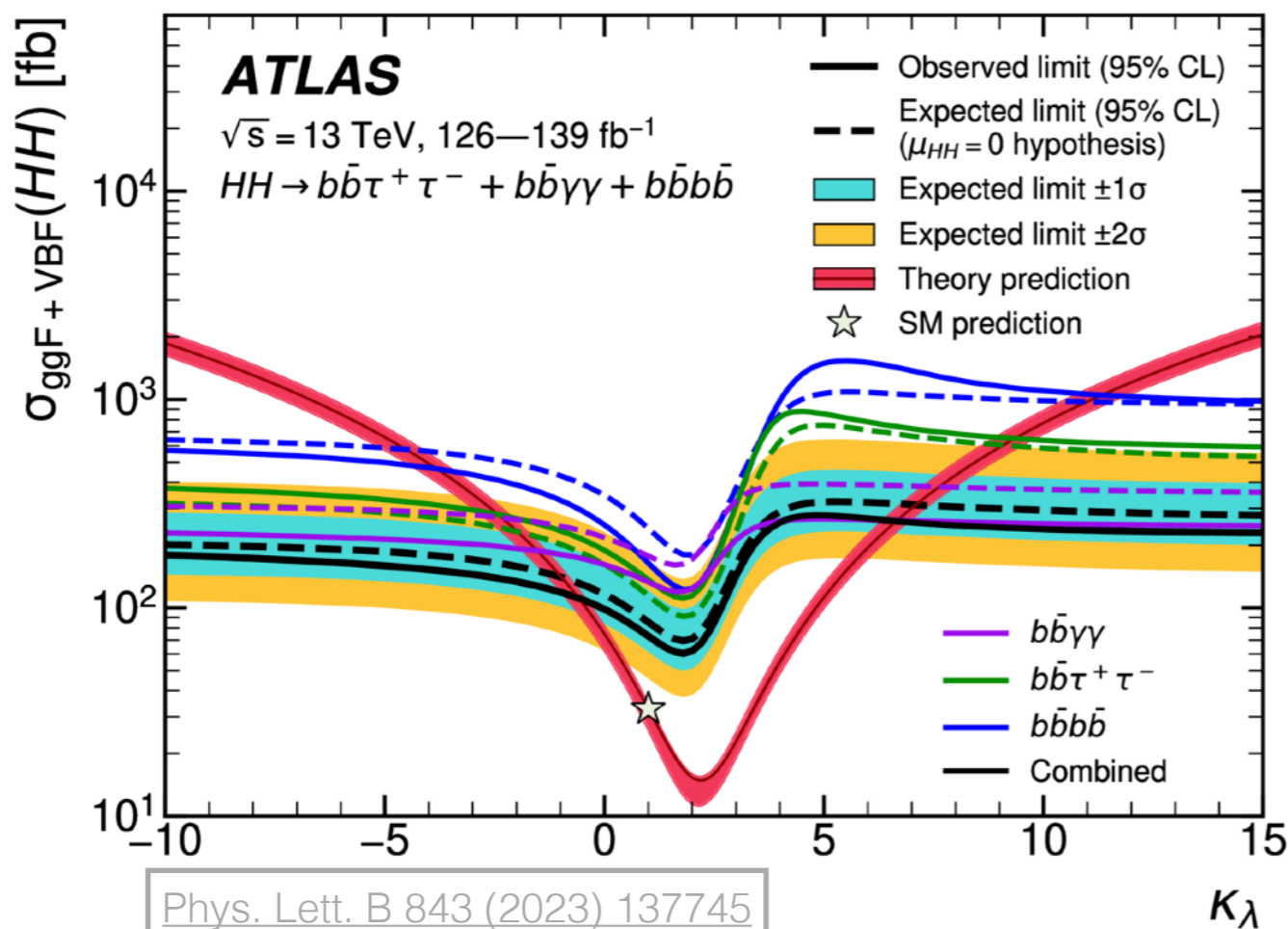
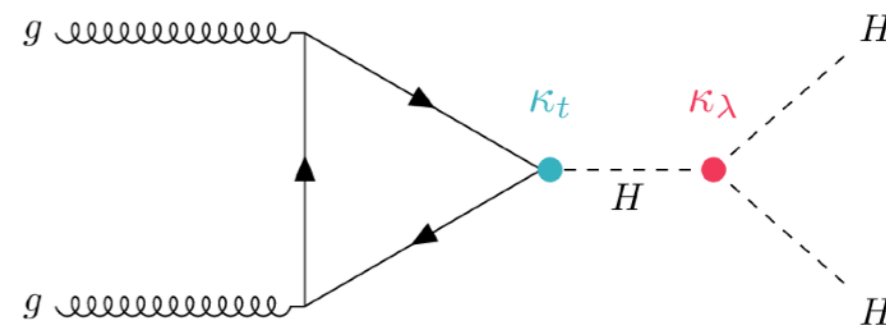


**Combining everything together...**

# Higgs self-coupling constraints

Allowed  $\kappa_\lambda$  ranges

- **What did we learn** about the Higgs self-coupling?
- $\kappa_\lambda$  **scan**: upper-limits on  $\sigma_{HH}$  assuming signal normalisation and kinematic at each value of  $\kappa_\lambda$

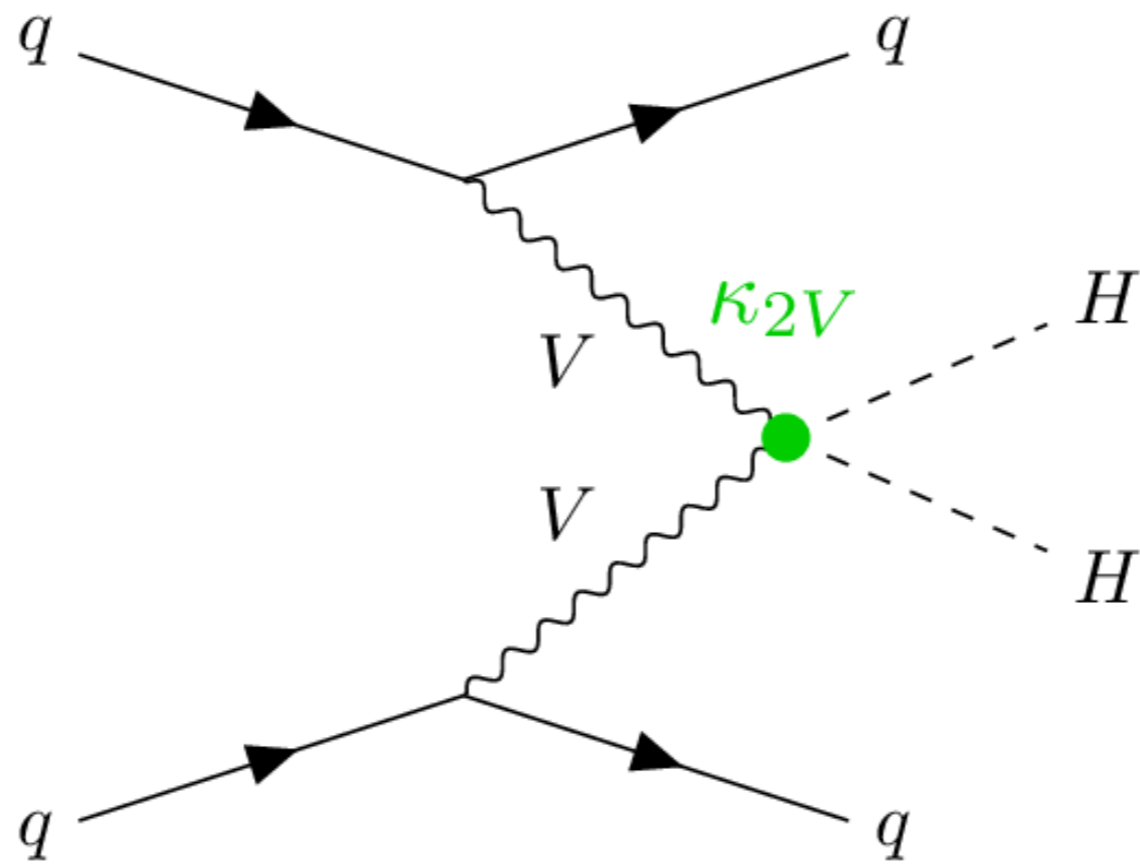


- Observed allowed  $\kappa_\lambda$  range is measured to be  $-0.6 < \kappa_\lambda < 6.6$
- For the standard model point, combined observed (expected) 95% CL upper limit:  $\mu_{SM}^{95\%} = 2.4 (2.9)!$

Very close to the SM signal! We are getting close to regions with exciting BSM physics scenarios!

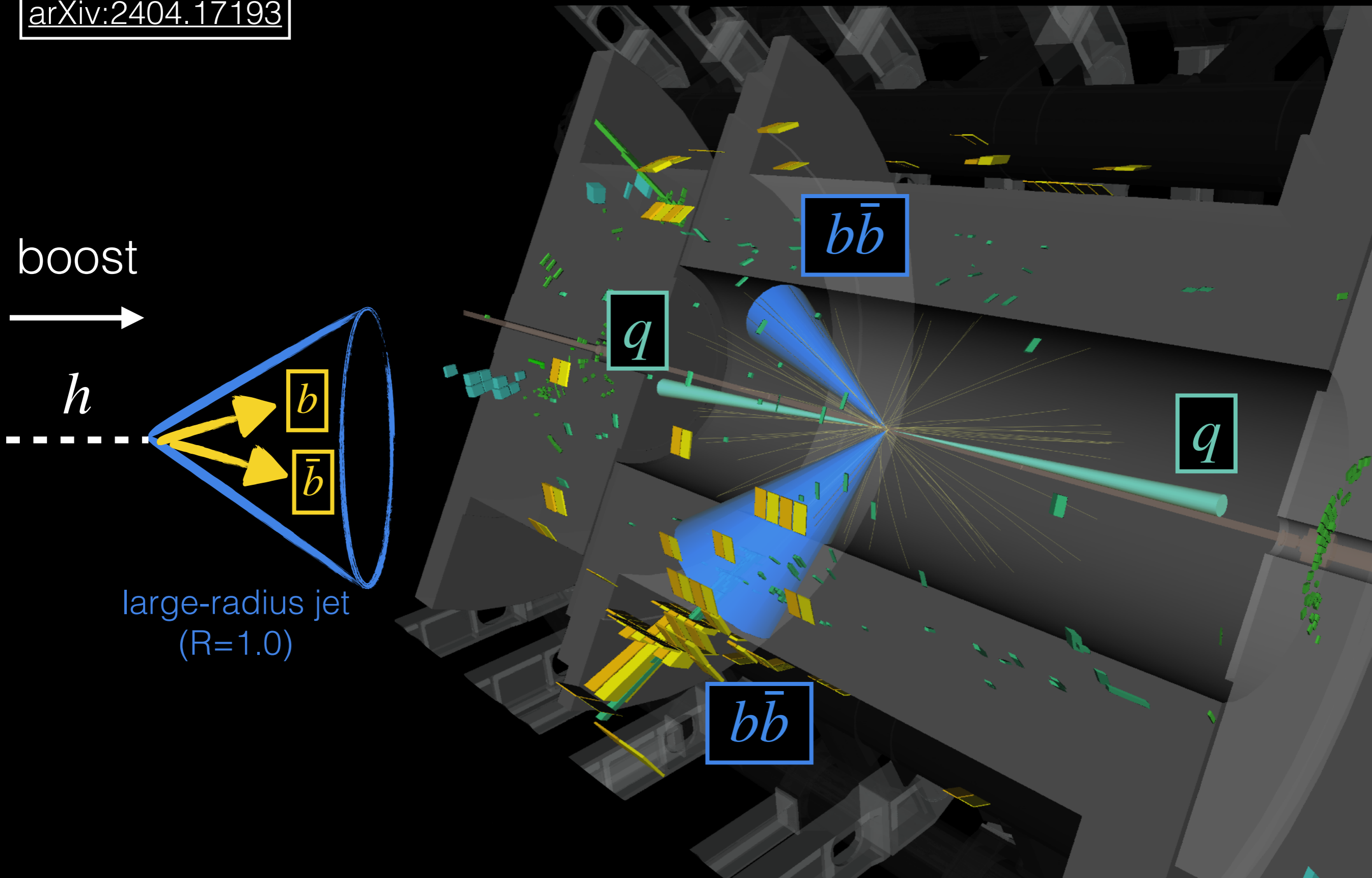


And for VBF ( $k_{2V}$ )?



# Boosted VBF $HH \rightarrow b\bar{b}b\bar{b}$ analysis ( $139 \text{ fb}^{-1}$ )

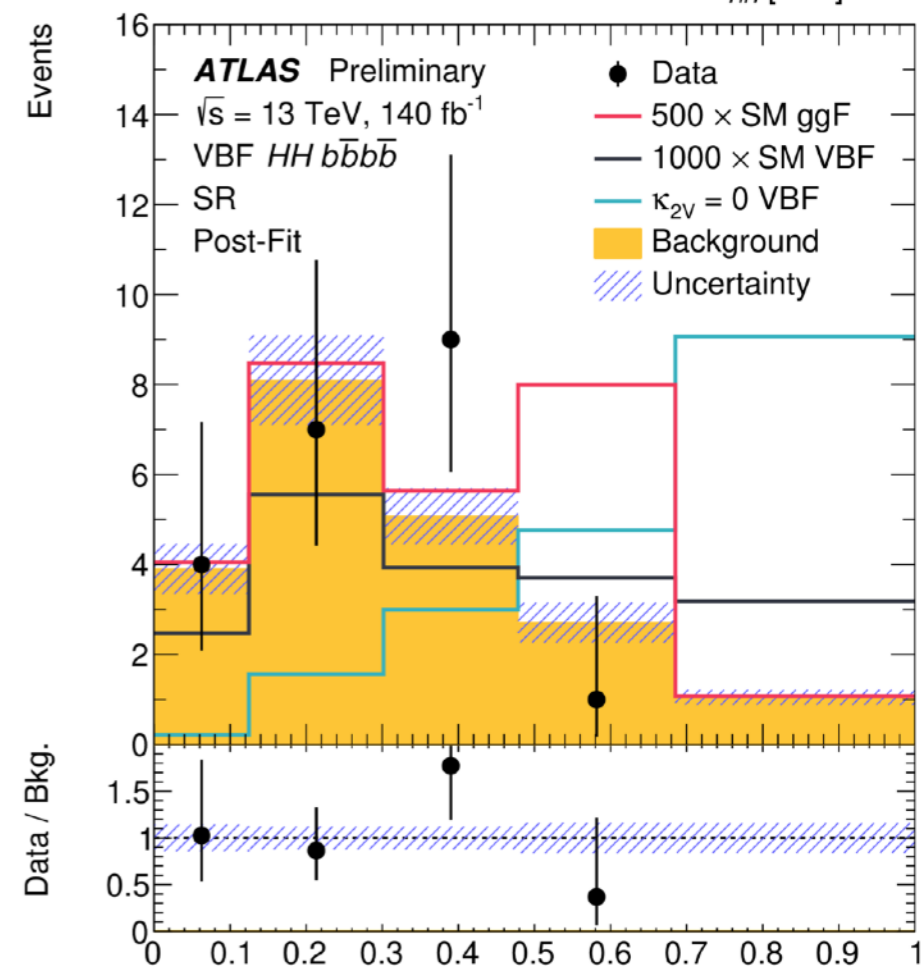
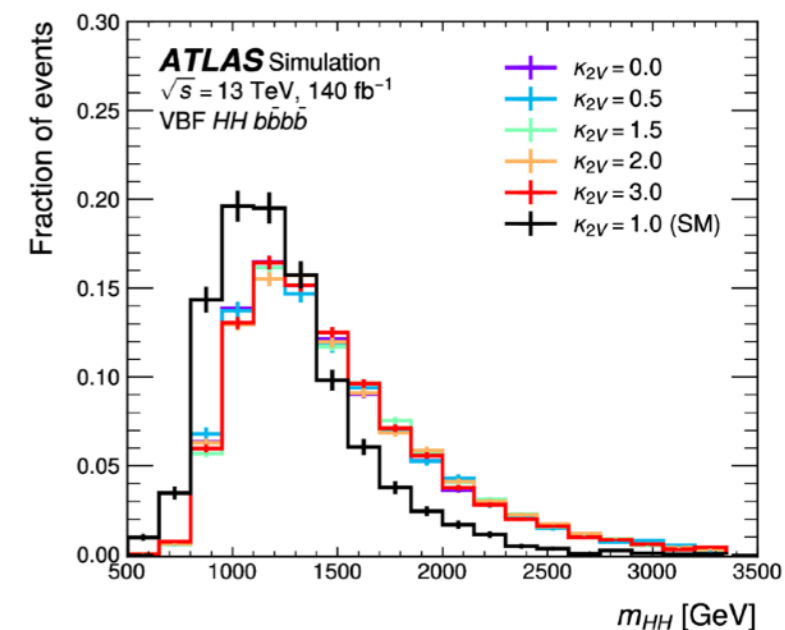
arXiv:2404.17193



# Boosted VBF $HH \rightarrow b\bar{b}b\bar{b}$

## Analysis strategy

- Extremely **high sensitivity to  $k_{2V}$  variations** due to kinematic boost of Higgs bosons.
  - Less statistics, but also **much less backgrounds!**
- $H \rightarrow b\bar{b}$  identified through **dedicated machine-learning double-b tagger** ([ATL-PHYS-PUB-2020-019](#)).
- Selection:
  - **2 large-radius jets** tagged as  $H \rightarrow b\bar{b}$  (60% eff.)
  - **2 small-radius jets** close to the beam ( $|\Delta\eta(j, j)| > 3$ )
- Background estimation: fully data-driven ABCD method.
- No excess above SM prediction.



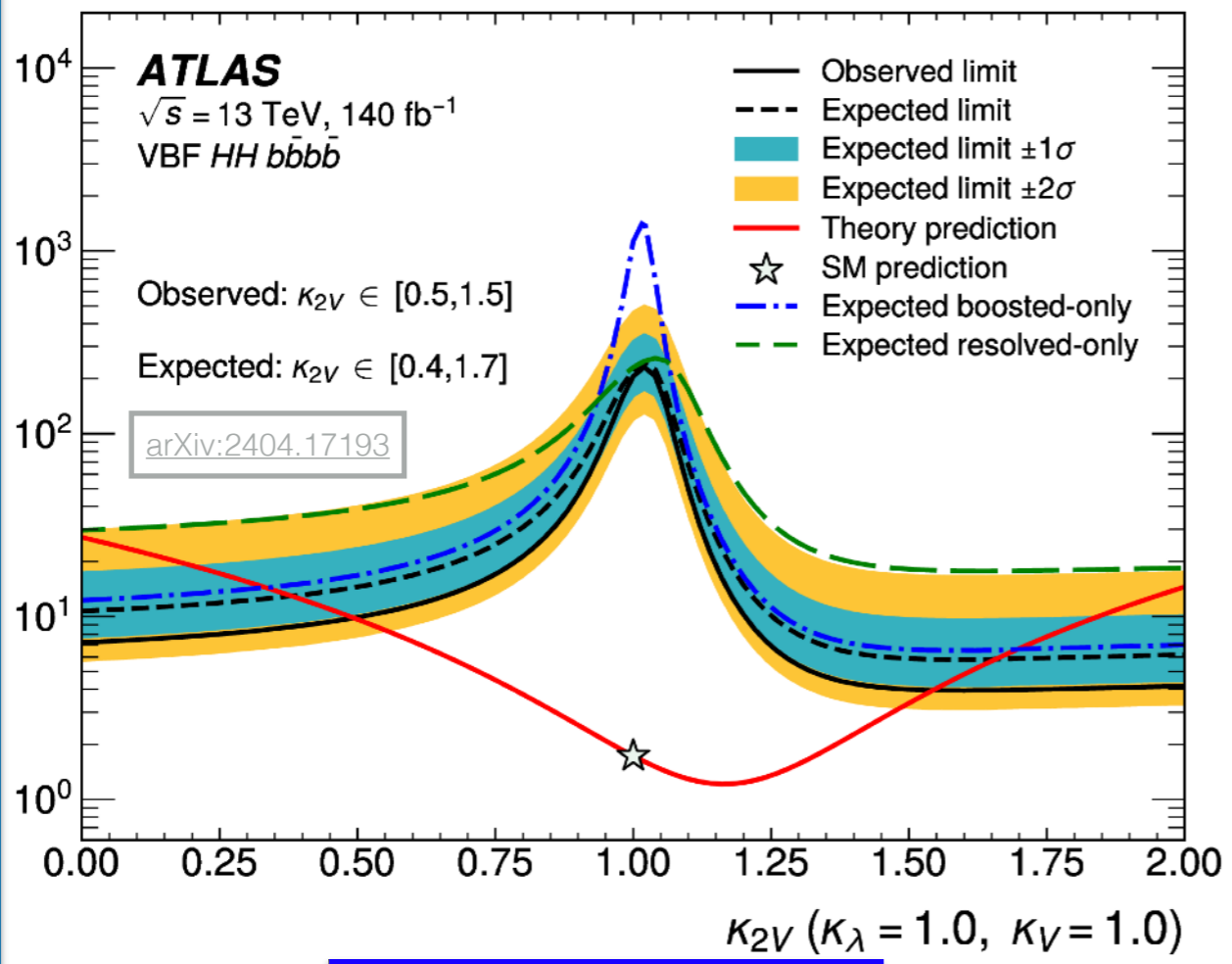


# Boosted VBF $HH \rightarrow b\bar{b}b\bar{b}$

$\kappa_{2V}$  limits

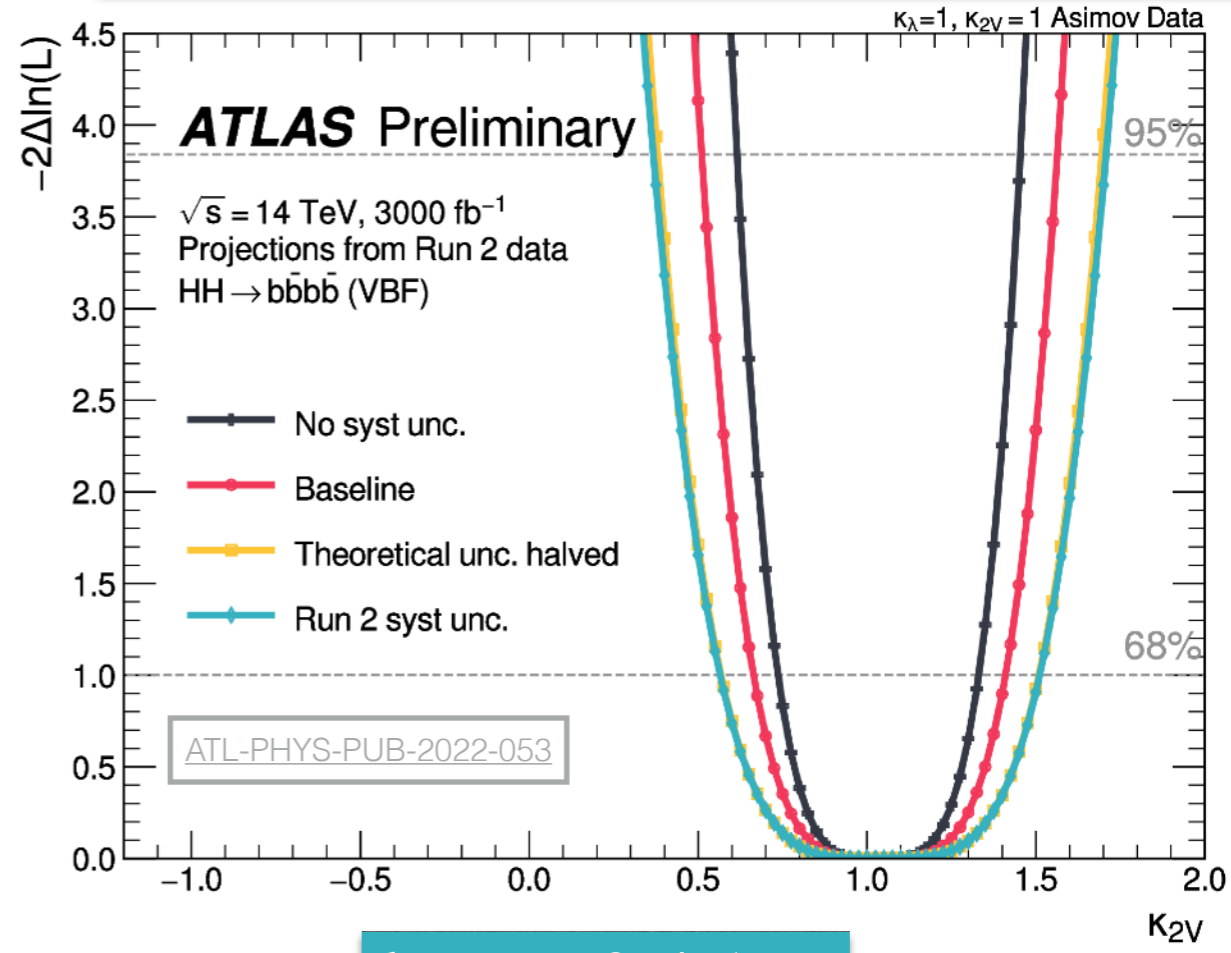
- At 95% CL:  $\kappa_{2V} \in [0.52, 1.52]$  (boosted-only)!
  - Much more sensitive than resolved  $b\bar{b}b\bar{b}$ ,  $b\bar{b}\gamma\gamma$  and  $b\bar{b}\tau^+\tau^-$  ( $\kappa_{2V} \in [0.1, 2.0]$ )!
- Even more sensitive than expected sensitivity at the HL-LHC ( $3000 \text{ fb}^{-1}$ )! A huge step forward in just a couple of years!

Boosted VBF  $HH \rightarrow b\bar{b}b\bar{b}$  ( $140 \text{ fb}^{-1}$ )



$\kappa_{2V} \in [0.52, 1.52]$

Resolved  $HH \rightarrow b\bar{b}b\bar{b}$  at HL-LHC ( $3000 \text{ fb}^{-1}$ )



$\kappa_{2V} \in [0.4, 1.7]$



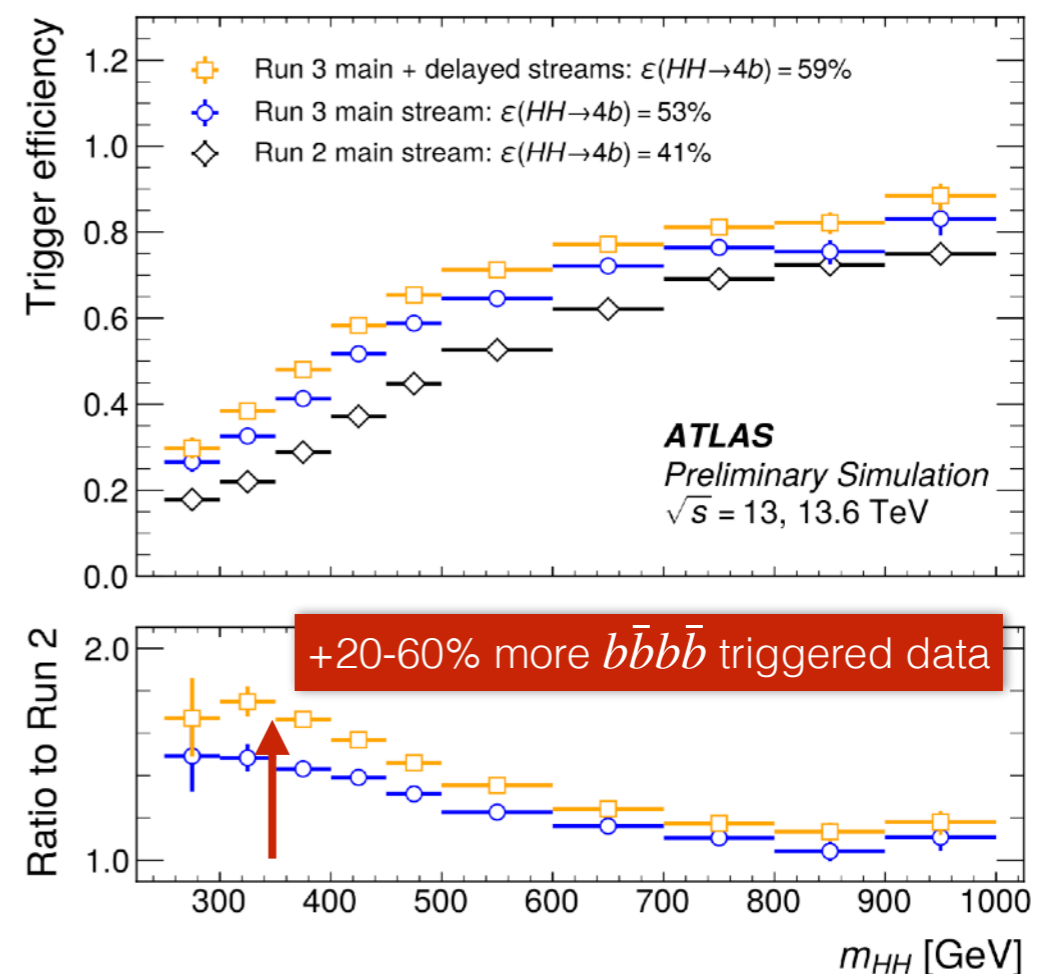
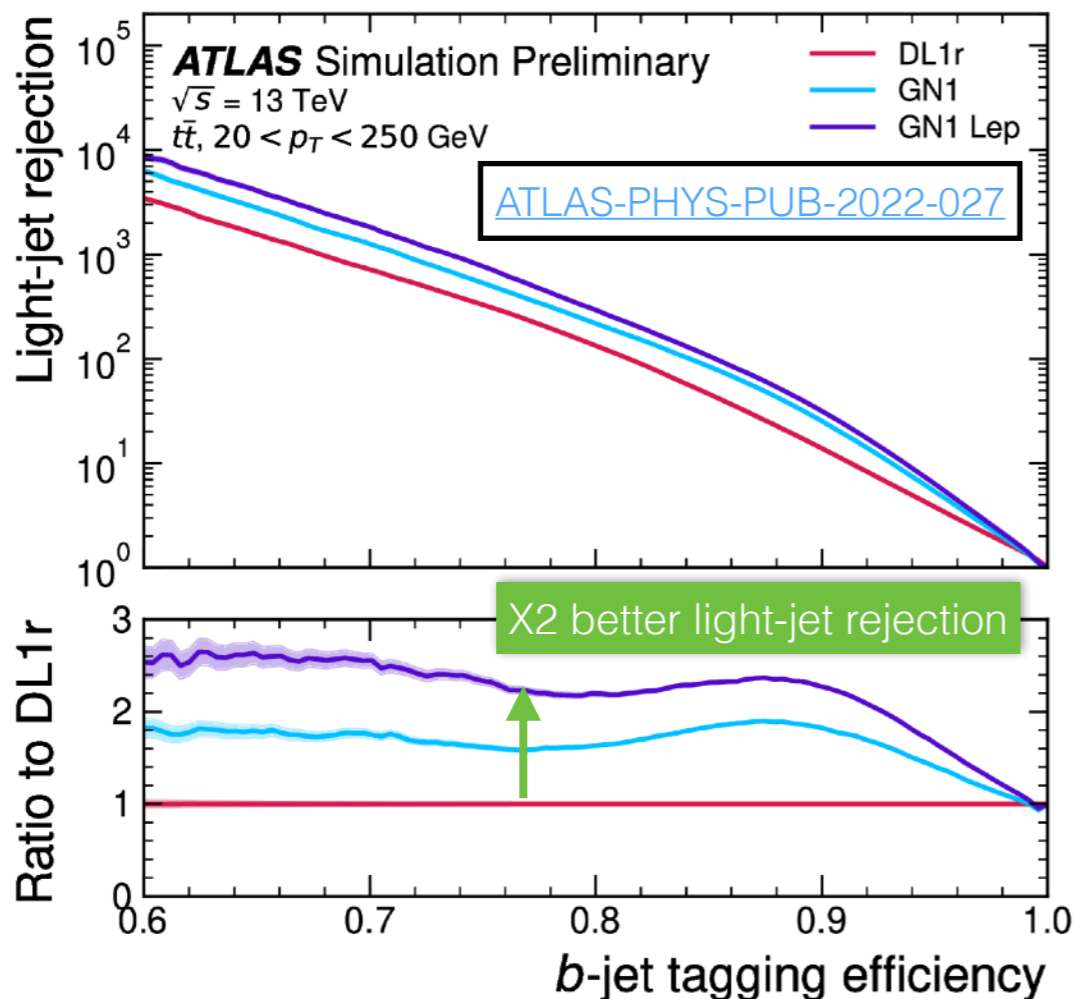
**So no unexpected Higgs self-coupling  
values for now.**

**Can we improve the precision in future?**

# Run 3 ATLAS improvements

More data, better reconstruction and triggers

- Expect a **large number of improvements** by the end of Run 3 (2022-2025).
  - **More data** ( $150 - 250 \text{ fb}^{-1}$  in Run 3) and  $+10\% \sigma(HH)$  with  $\sqrt{s} = 13.6 \text{ TeV}$
  - **b-tagging largely improved** with Graph Neural Networks!
  - **Triggers significantly improved** (e.g. asymmetric  $HH \rightarrow b\bar{b}b\bar{b}$  triggers)!

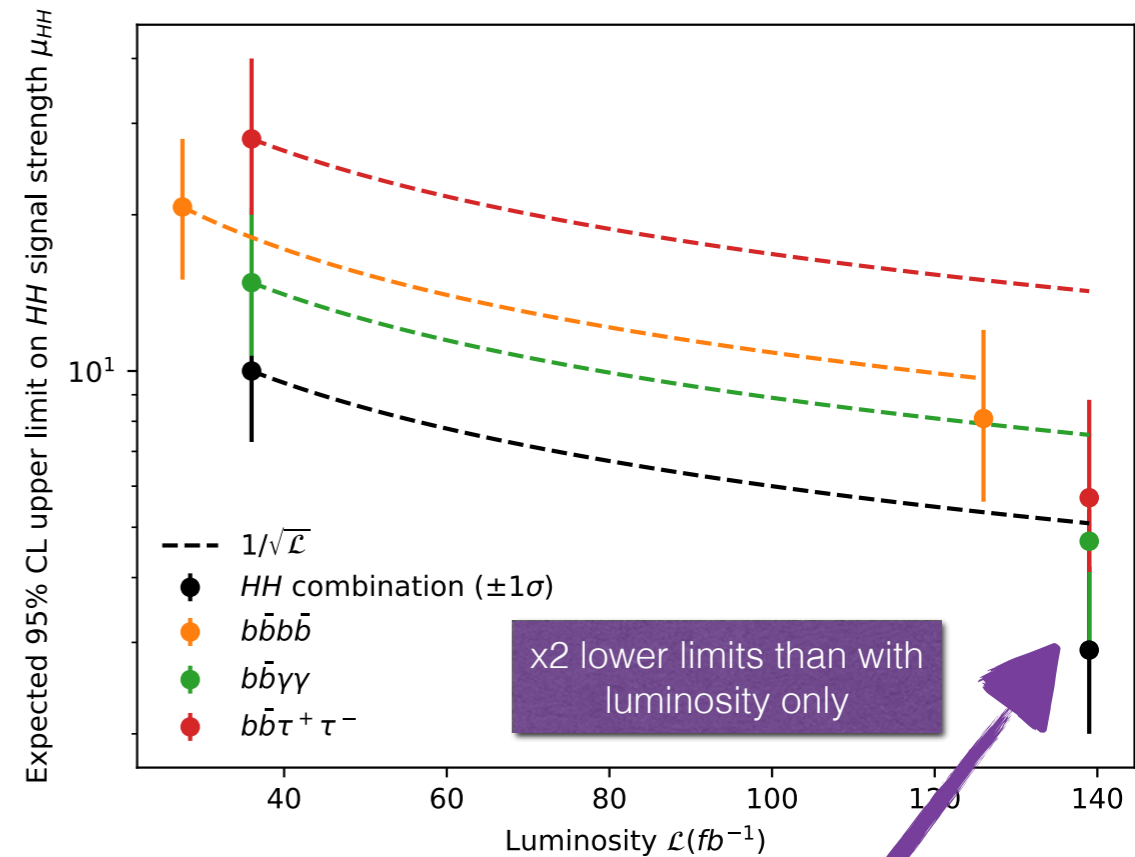


# Conclusion and prospects

- The Higgs sector is **UNIQUE** and still **largely unexplored!**
  - Shape of the **Higgs potential essential** to fully understand EWSB and the evolution of the universe.

Only started to understand the Higgs!

- **HH searches** at the (HL-)LHC are currently the **best tool** to constrain  $V(\phi)$ :
  - **Huge improvements on  $\kappa_\lambda$  and  $\kappa_{2V}$  constraints achieved** with Run 2 ATLAS dataset.
  - $5\sigma$  discovery achievable at the HL-LHC (ATLAS+CMS).
  - **More improvements are expected for Run 3** (more data, better triggers, better physics object identification, etc.).



The human factor is important!

If something is unexpected in the Higgs potential, Run 3 might already reveal this to us!



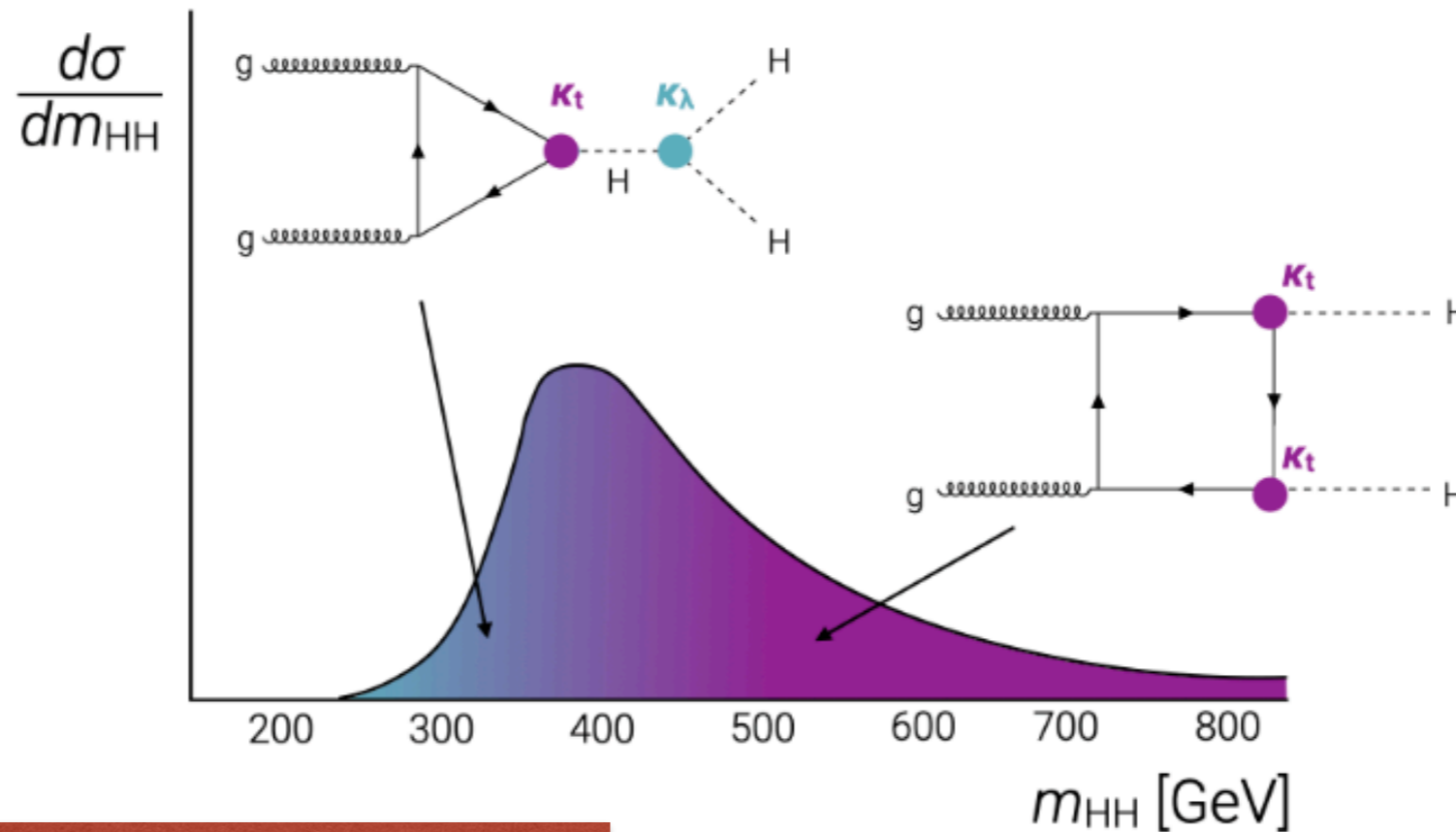
*Thank you for your attention!*

**Backup**

# Challenges of HH production at the LHC

The unbearable lightness of HH

Not only small cross-section, **but also complex signal kinematic** due to diagram interference!

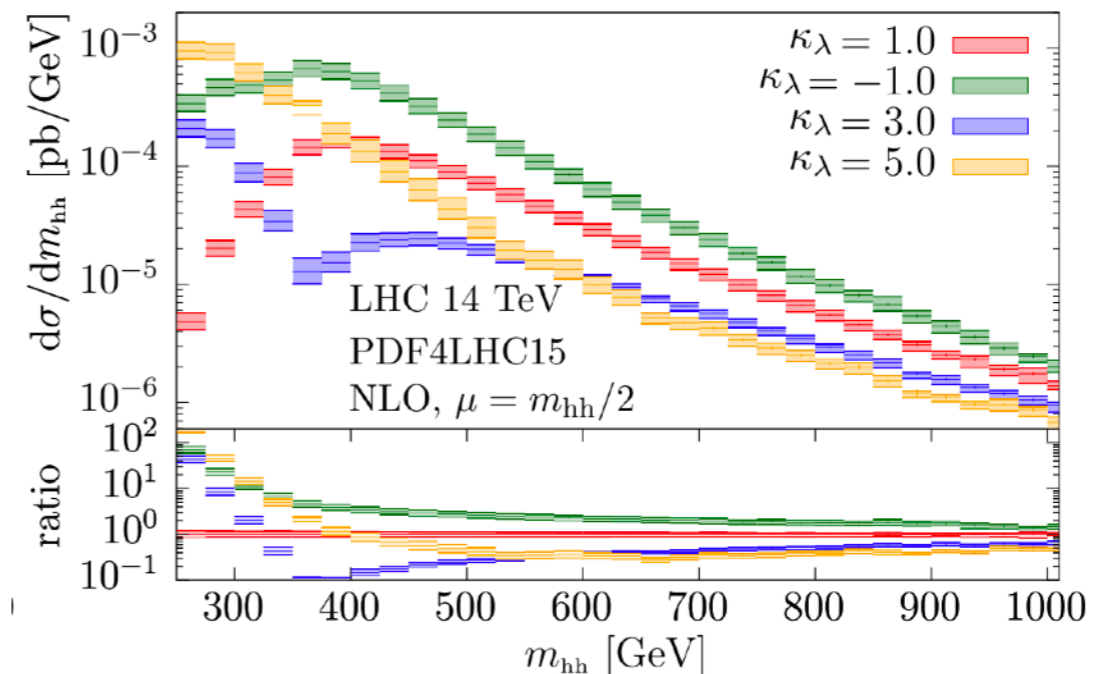


arXiv:1903.08137

Impact of  $\kappa_\lambda$  more visible in soft part (i.e. low  $p_T$ ) of the  $m_{HH}$  spectrum



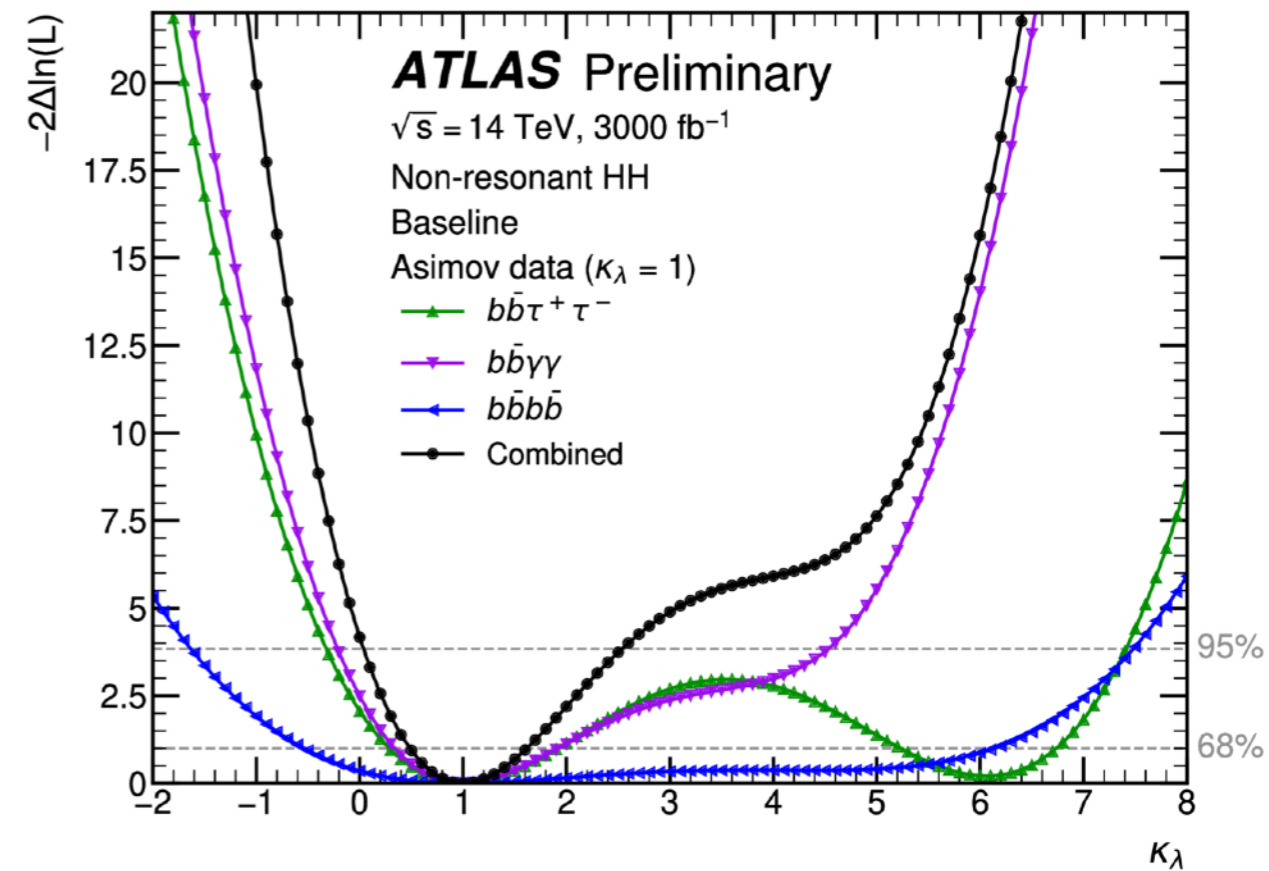
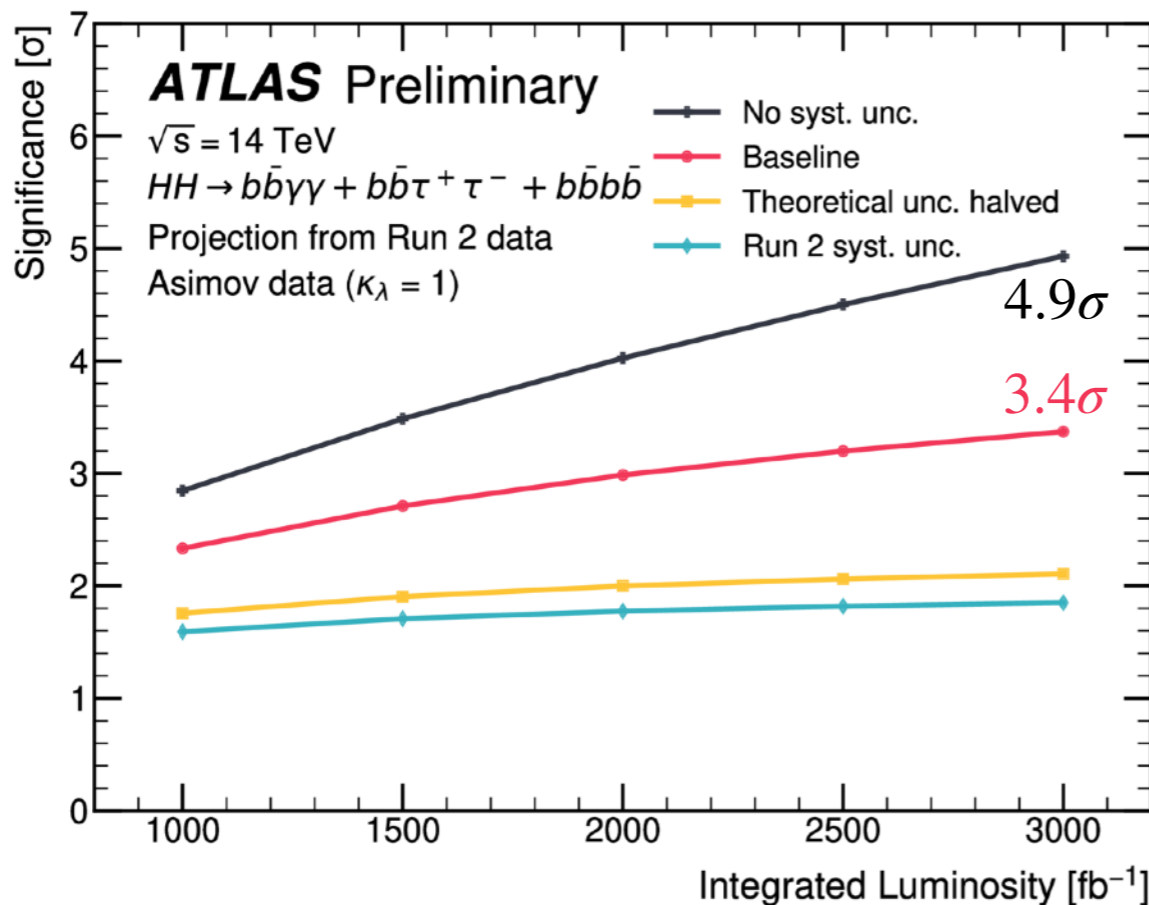
Access low  $m_{HH}$  events is hard due to soft Higgs kinematics!



# Updated HL-LHC projections for HH

[ATLAS-PHYS-PUB-2022-053](#)

- Assuming Run 2 detector performance and expected reduction of systematics, **statistical evidence ( $3.4\sigma$ ) is expected for SM HH ( $\kappa_\lambda = 1$ )** with  $3000 \text{ fb}^{-1}$ .
  - $\kappa_\lambda$  constrained to  $[0.5, 1.6]$  at 68% CL.
- Reduction of systematic uncertainties** could bring us **close to discovery ( $4.9\sigma$  with stat. only)**. And we still have to combine with CMS!



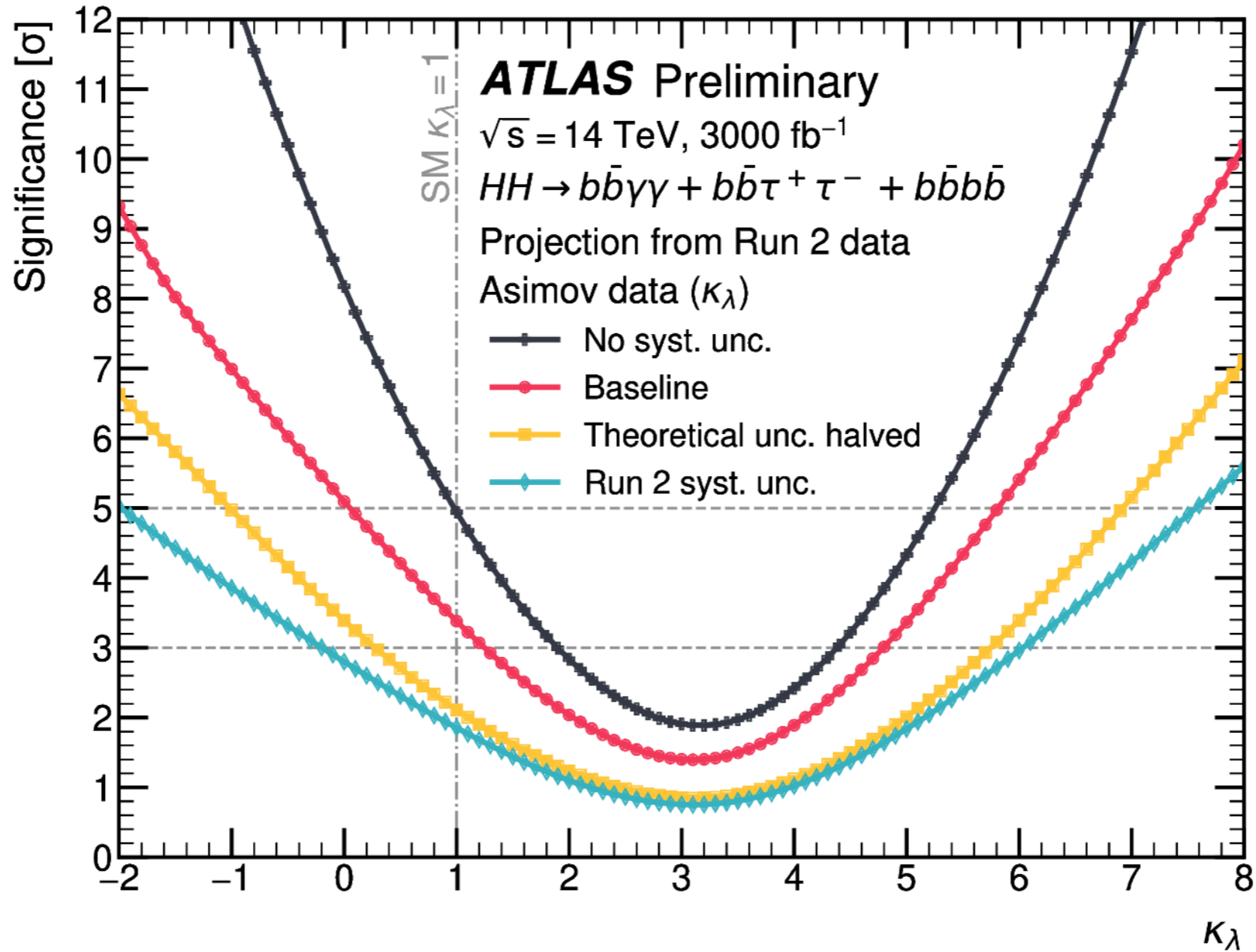


# Updated HL-LHC projections for HH

[ATLAS-PHYS-PUB-2022-053](#)

Charting the Higgs potential with pair-production of Higgs bosons at the ATLAS experiment  
CAP 2024 [27-31 Ma7 2024]

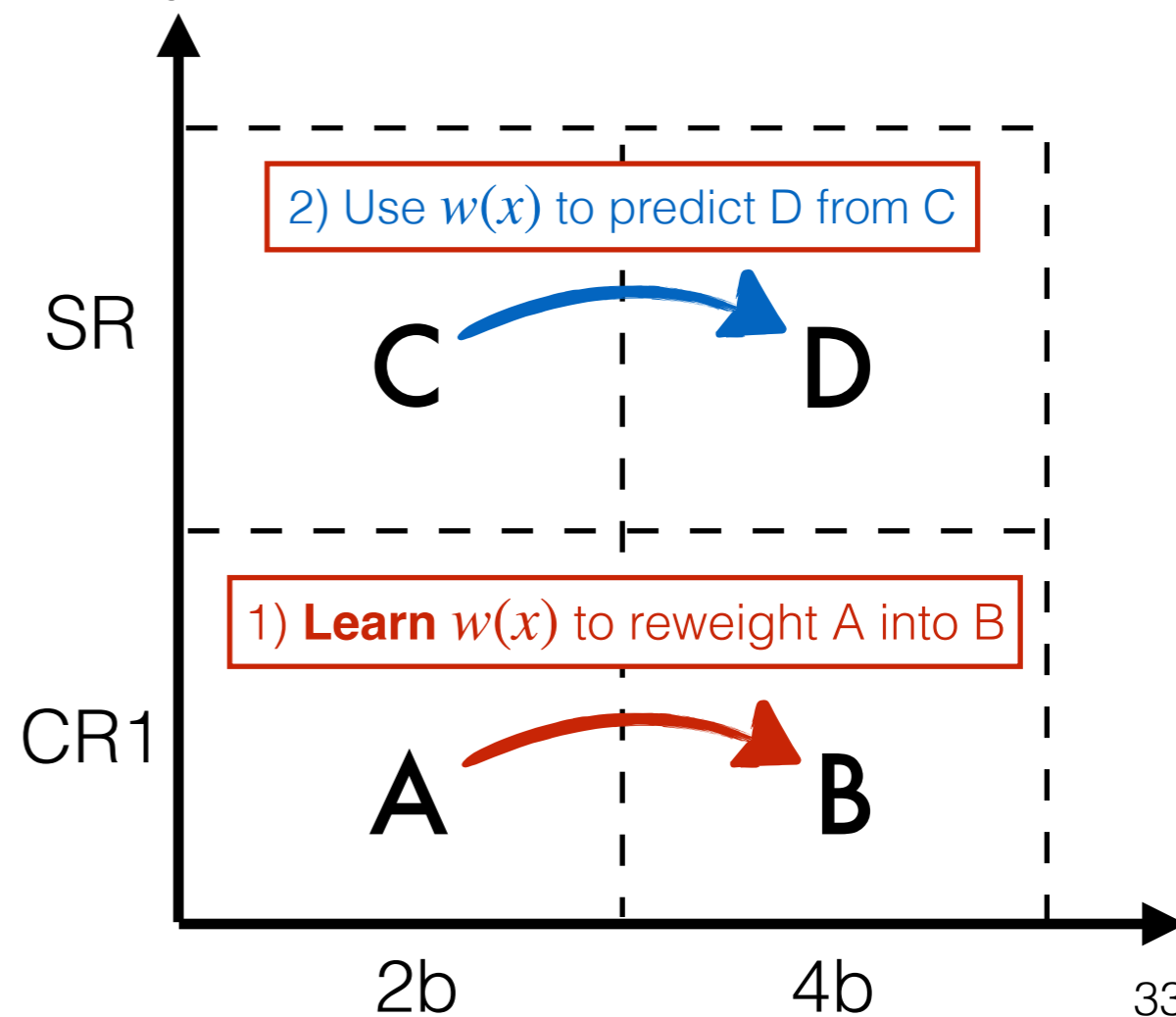
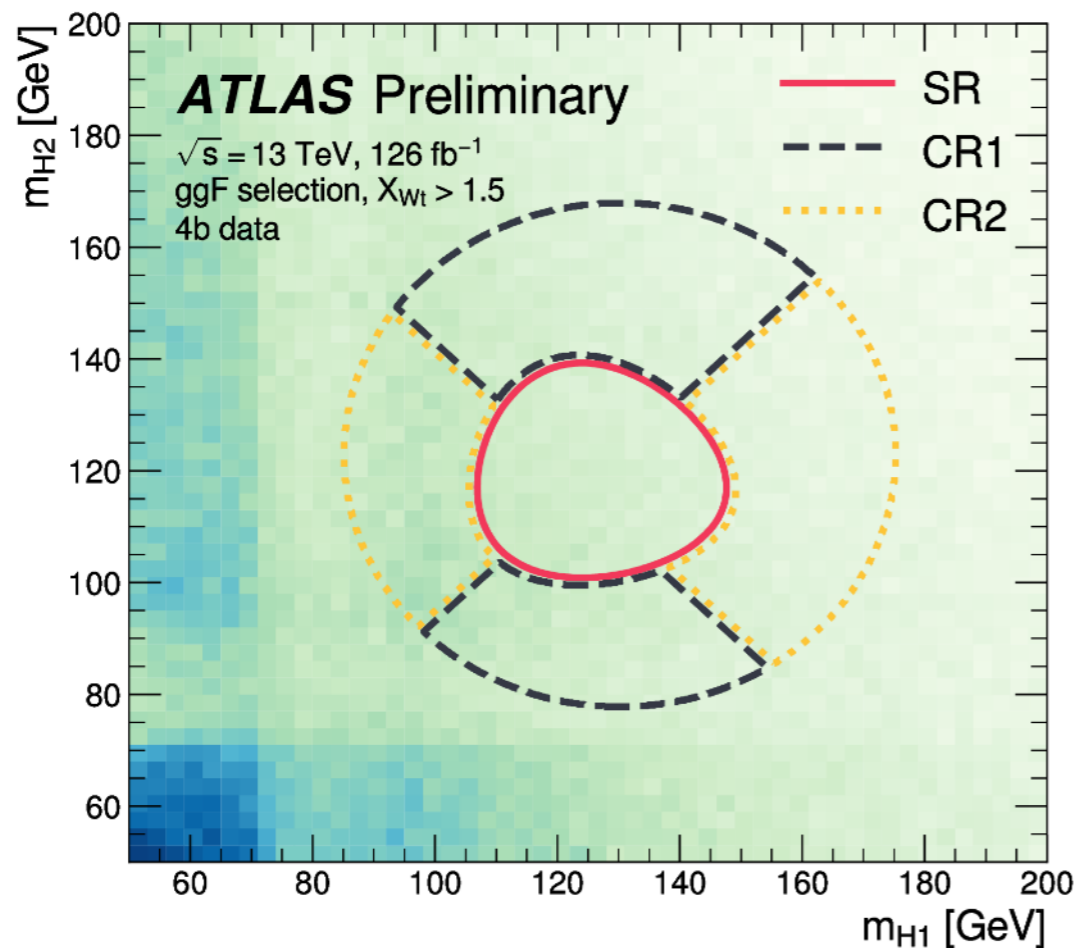
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Physics department  
TRIUMF, Canada's particle accelerator  
Centre



# $HH \rightarrow b\bar{b}b\bar{b}$ analysis

Background estimation

- Background: QCD multijet (90%) and  $t\bar{t}$  (10%) estimated using a **fully data-driven** method.
  - **Machine-learning algorithm learns weight  $w(x)$** , where  $x$  are different event kinematic variables, to **reweight CR1- 2b into CR1-4b** events
  - $w(x)$  **applied to SR-2b** to obtain SR-4b background estimation.
- Alternative  $w'(x)$  from CR2 used to estimate systematics uncertainties.



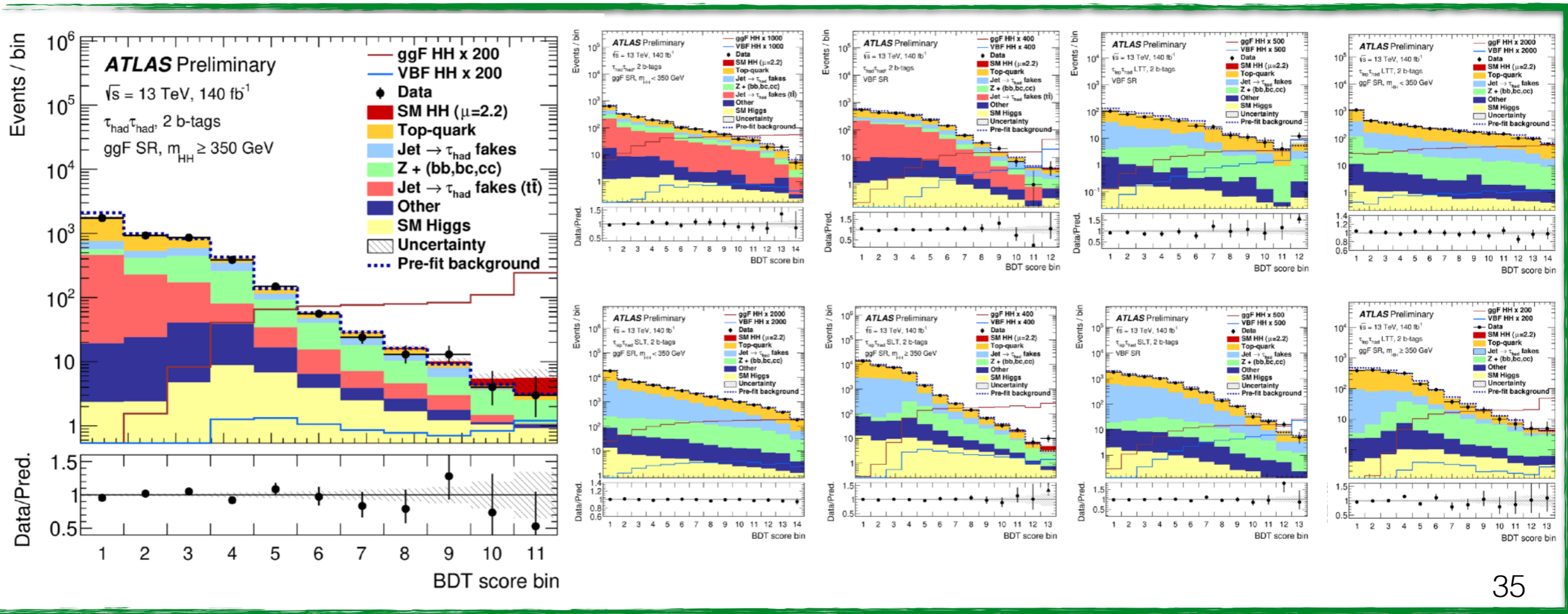




# $HH \rightarrow b\bar{b}\tau\tau$ analysis

Background estimation and results

- Dominant backgrounds:  $t\bar{t}$  and  $Z(\rightarrow \tau\tau)+bb/bc/cc$
- Final observation: **binned fit of MVA scores in all 9 categories.**
- **No significant excess** above SM prediction observed.



# SM cross-section upper limits

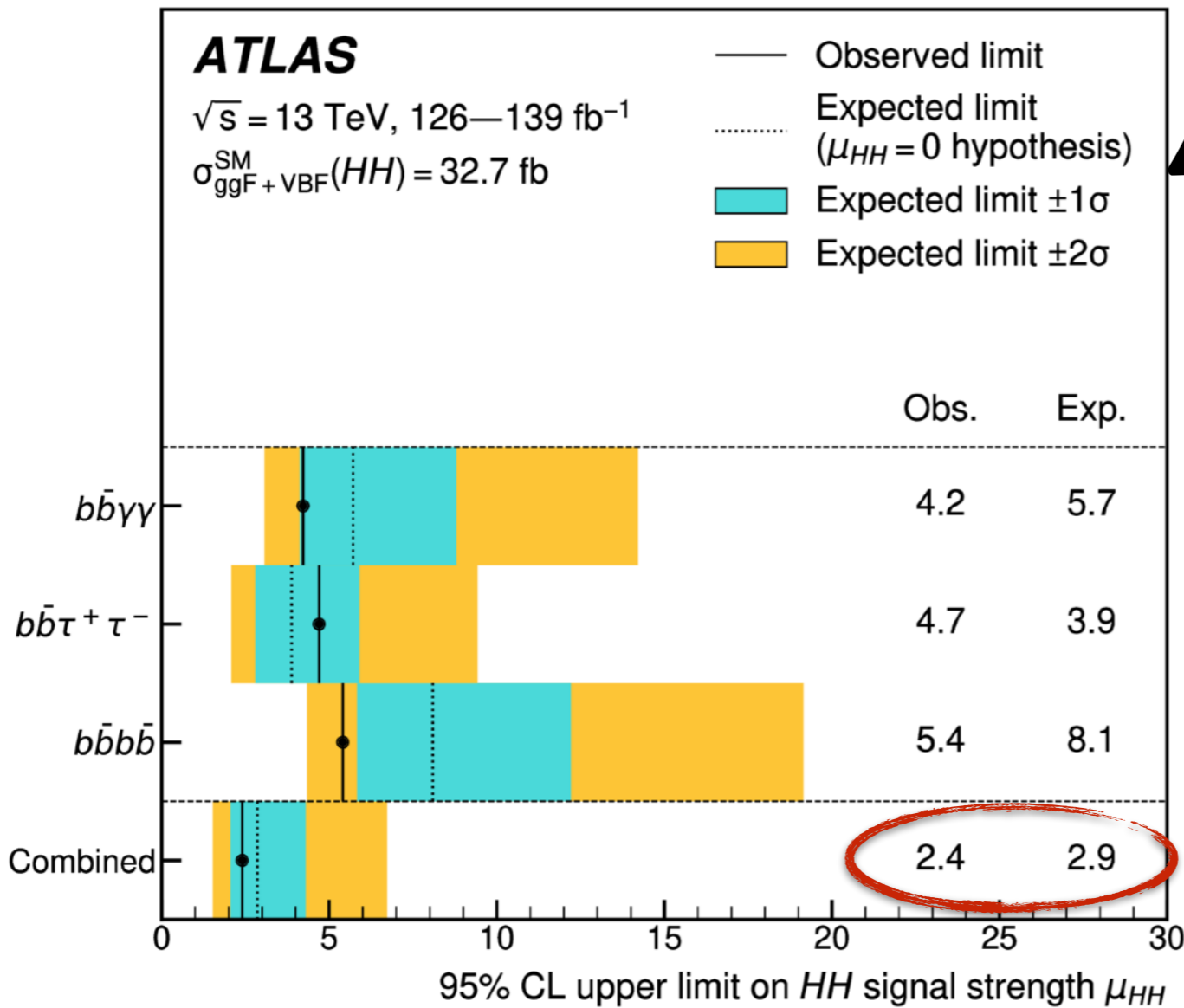
Results

- Statistical **combination** maximises sensitivity to SM (and BSM) HH production

Phys. Lett. B 843 (2023) 137745

$$\mu_{HH} = \frac{\sigma^{\text{obs}}(pp \rightarrow HH)}{\sigma^{\text{SM}}(pp \rightarrow HH)}$$

Currently observing  $\mu_{HH}^{95\% \text{ CL}} < 2.4$



Previous result ( $36 \text{ fb}^{-1}$ )

Expected: 26xSM  
Observed: 20.3xSM

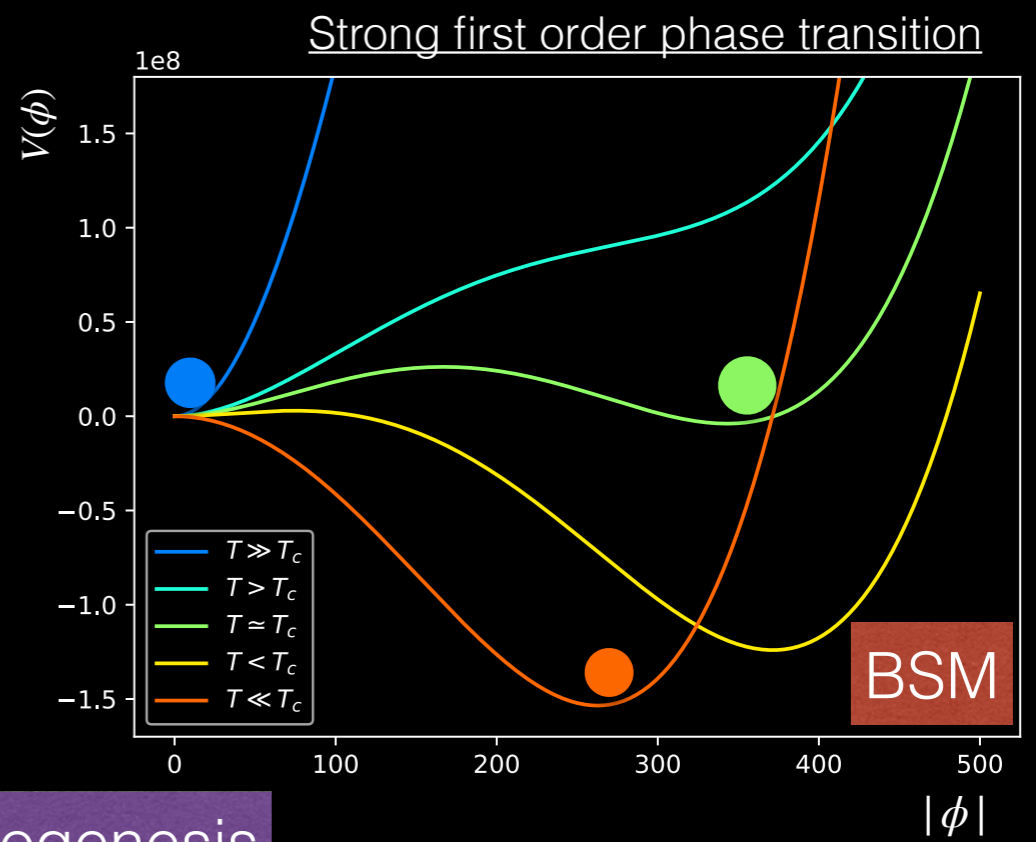
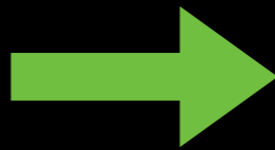
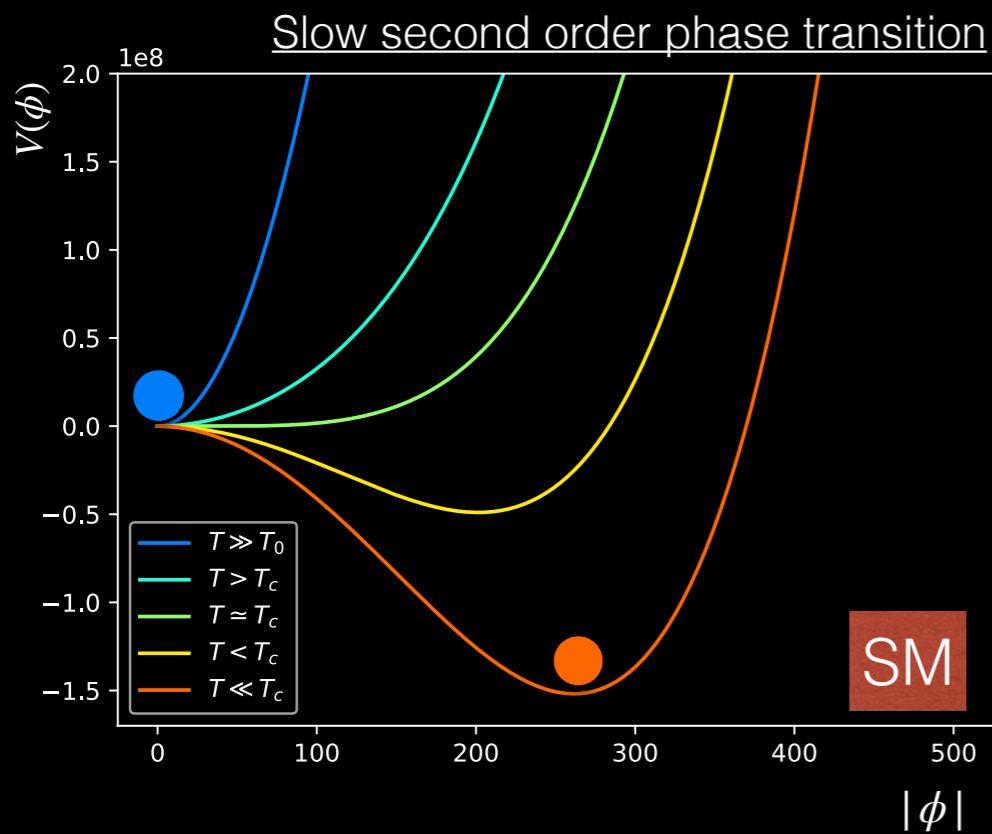
Expected: 15xSM  
Observed: 12.5xSM

Expected: 20.7xSM  
Observed: 12.9xSM

Expected: 10xSM  
Observed: 6.9xSM

Large improvement (x3.5) thanks to **luminosity**, better **reconstruction** (b-jet,  $\tau$ ) and **analysis improvements**

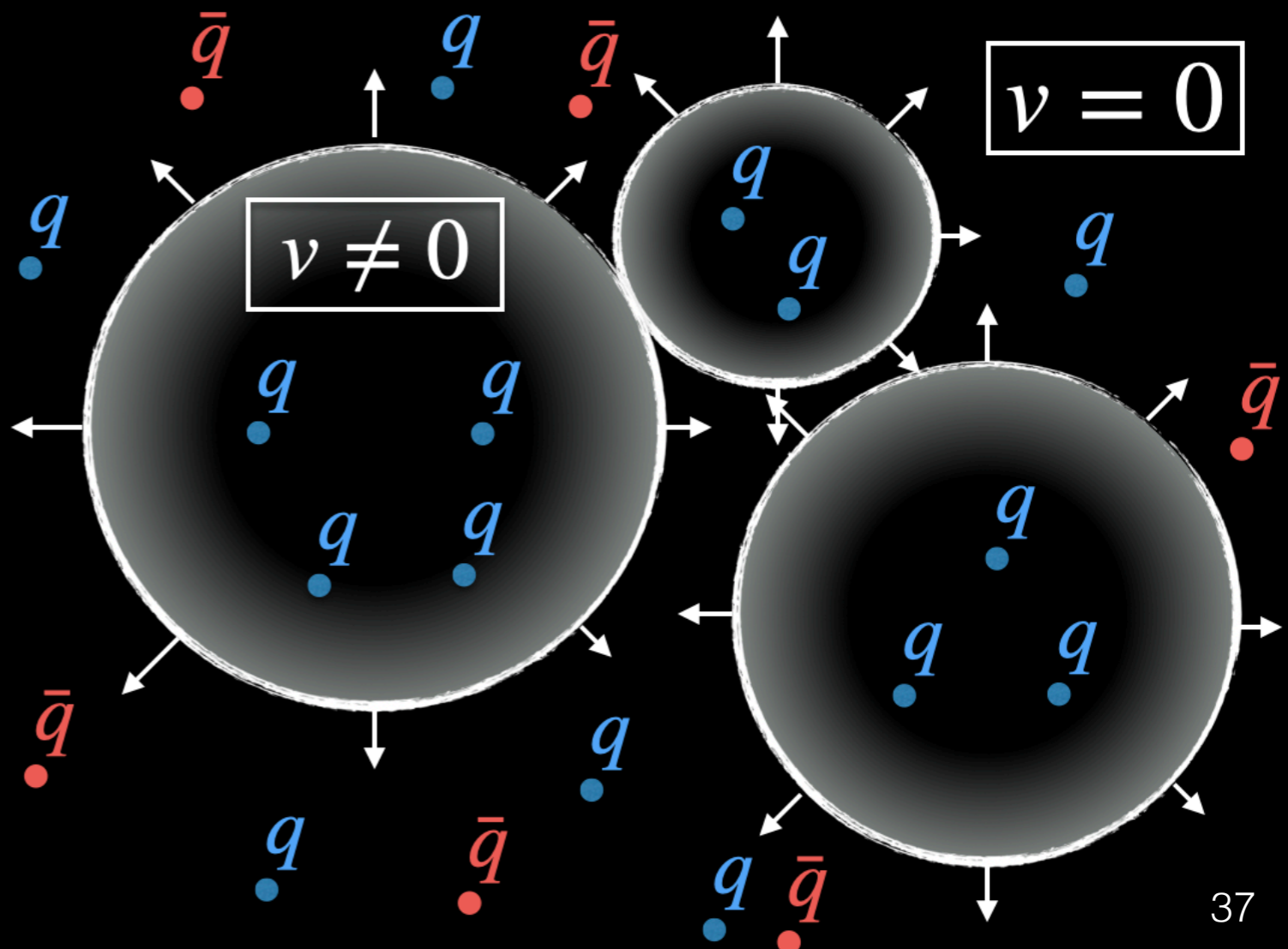
Getting very close to the SM ( $\mu_{HH} = 1$ )



EWK baryogenesis

- **BSM effect in the Higgs potential could explain the matter-antimatter asymmetry** of the universe.

- BSM physics acting on the Higgs potential would enable EWK bubble nucleation.



# $HH \rightarrow b\bar{b}\gamma\gamma$ analysis

Additional material

Charting the Higgs potential with pair-production of Higgs bosons at the ATLAS experiment  
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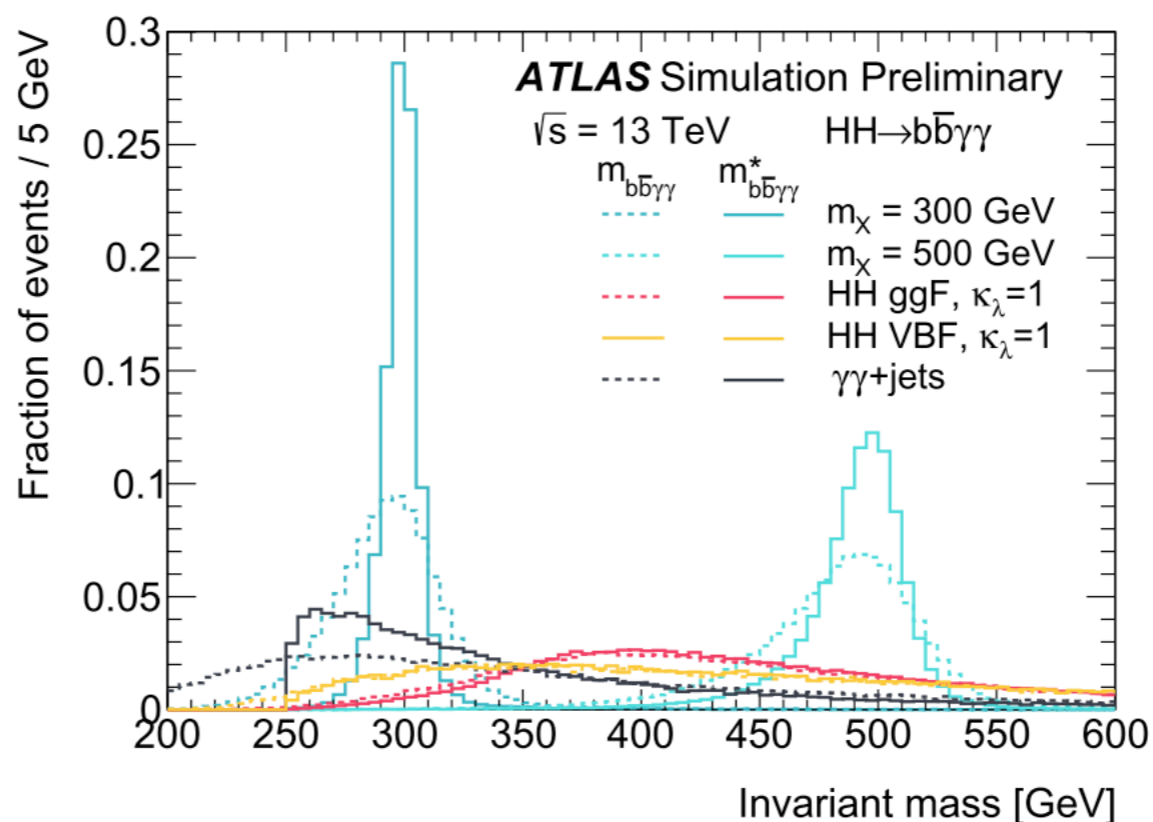


Figure 4: Reconstructed four-body mass for  $m_X = 300$  GeV and  $m_X = 500$  GeV resonant signal benchmarks and for the  $\gamma\gamma$ +jets background. Dashed lines represent the distribution of  $m_{b\bar{b}\gamma\gamma}$  while solid lines represent the distribution of  $m_{b\bar{b}\gamma\gamma}^*$ , defined in Section 4.2.1. Distributions are normalized to unit area.

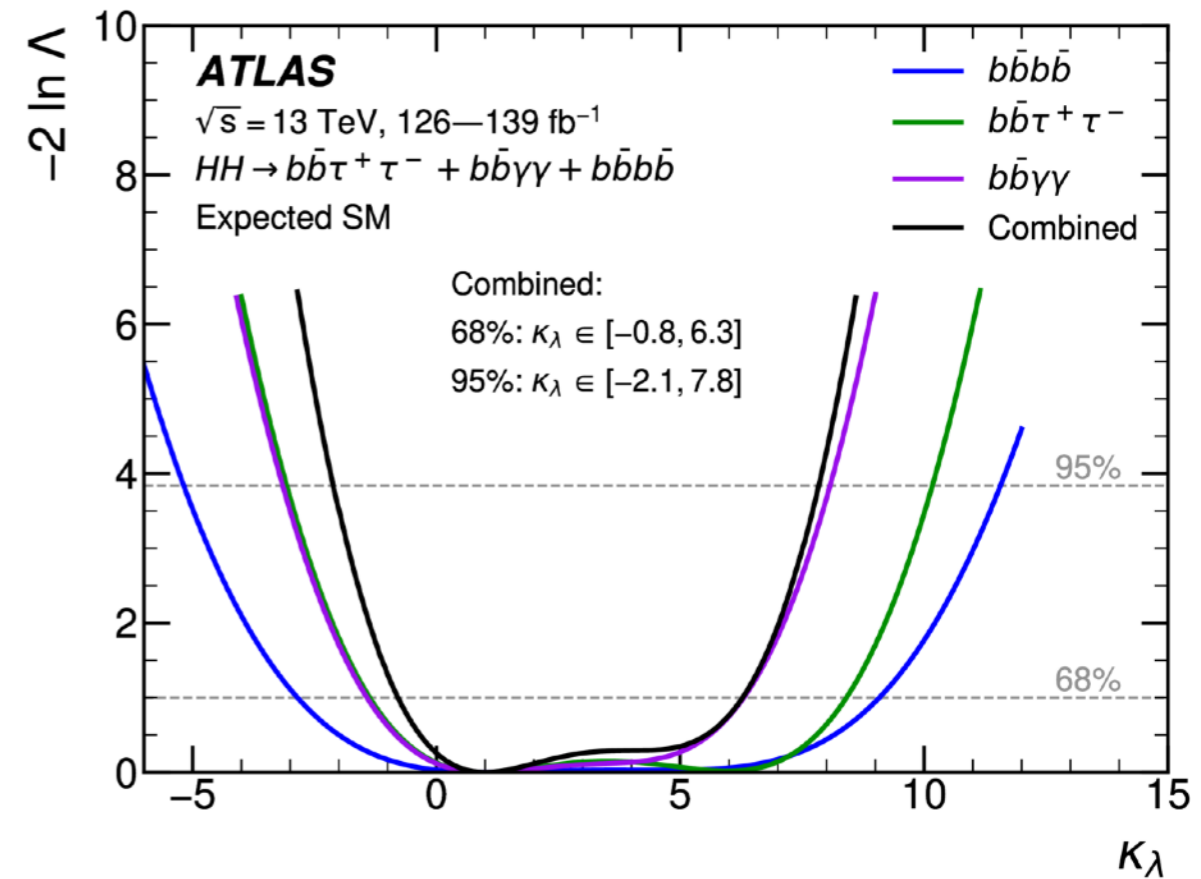
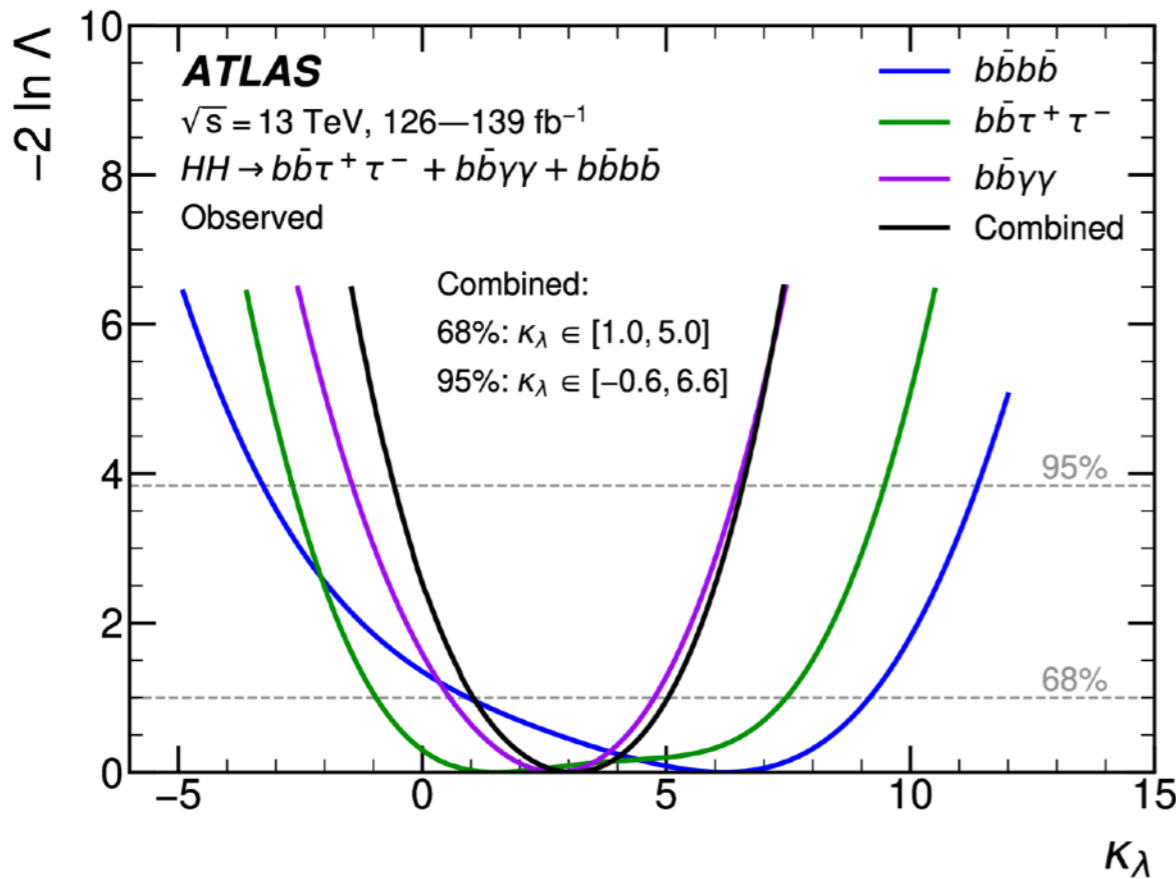


# HH combined and separate likelihoods

arxiv:2211.01216

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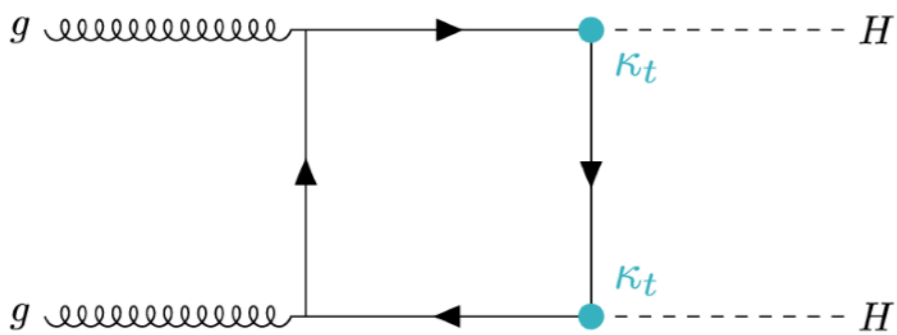


# Single-Higgs constraints to $\kappa_\lambda$ and $\kappa_t$

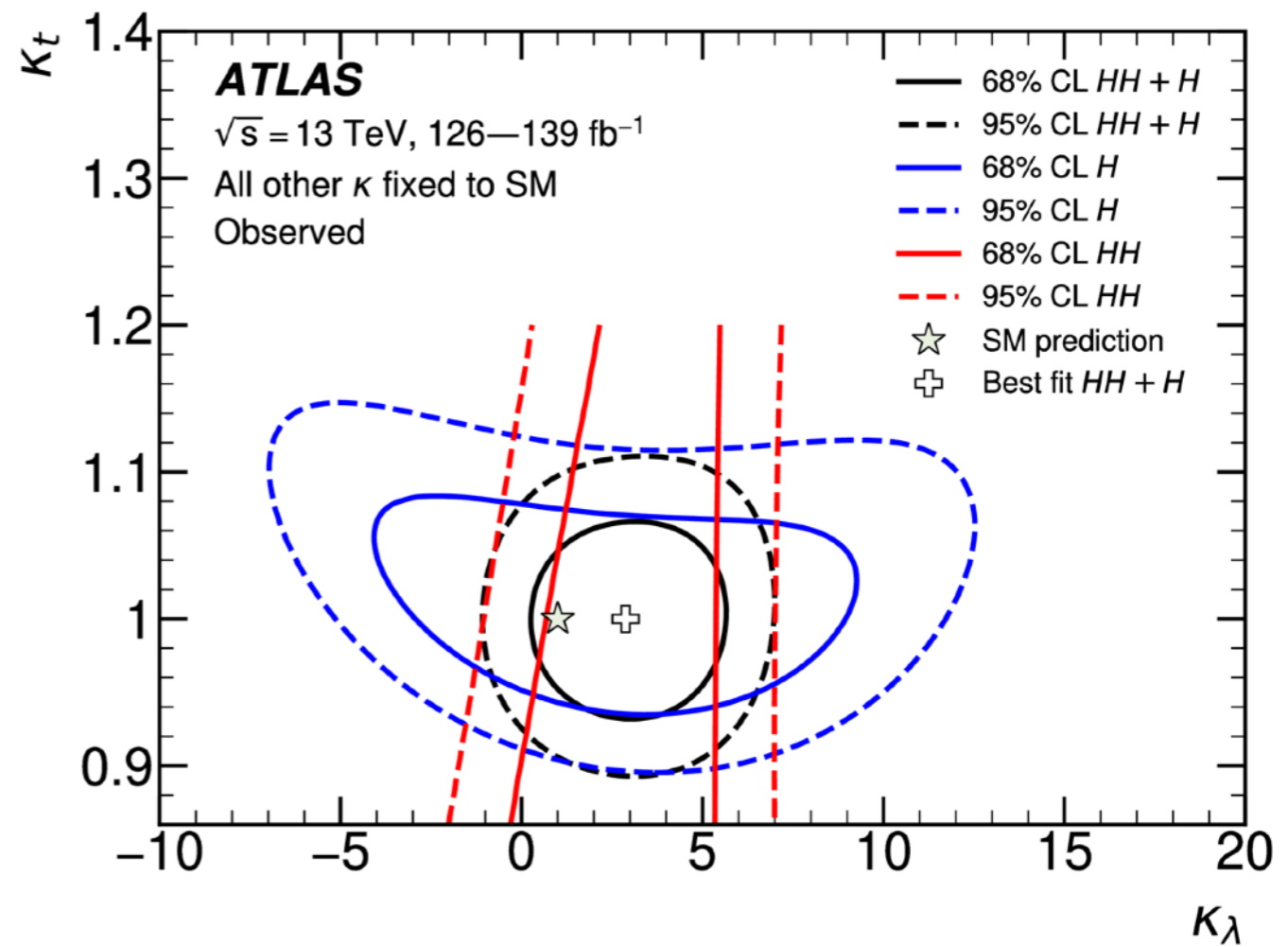
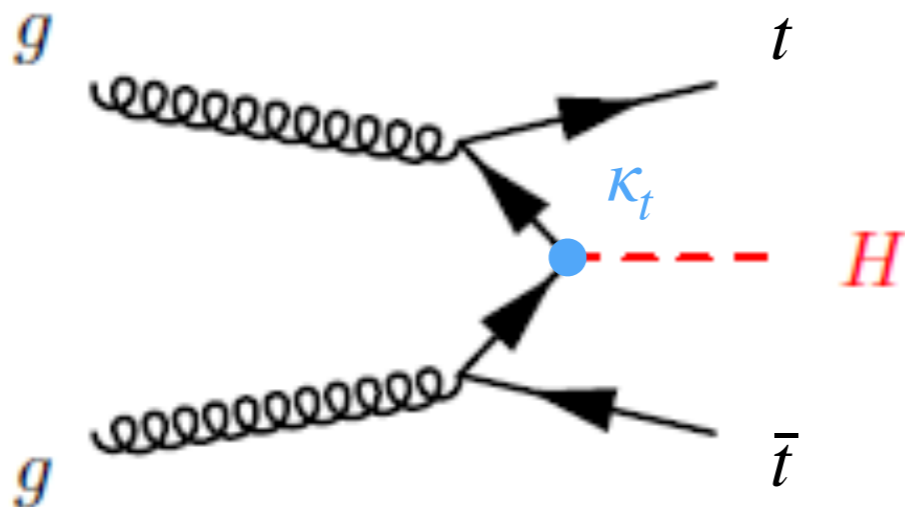
Results

- **Combination with  $ttH$**  also allow to constrain **HH box-diagram effects** via direct measurement of  $\kappa_t$

HH box diagram



$ttH$



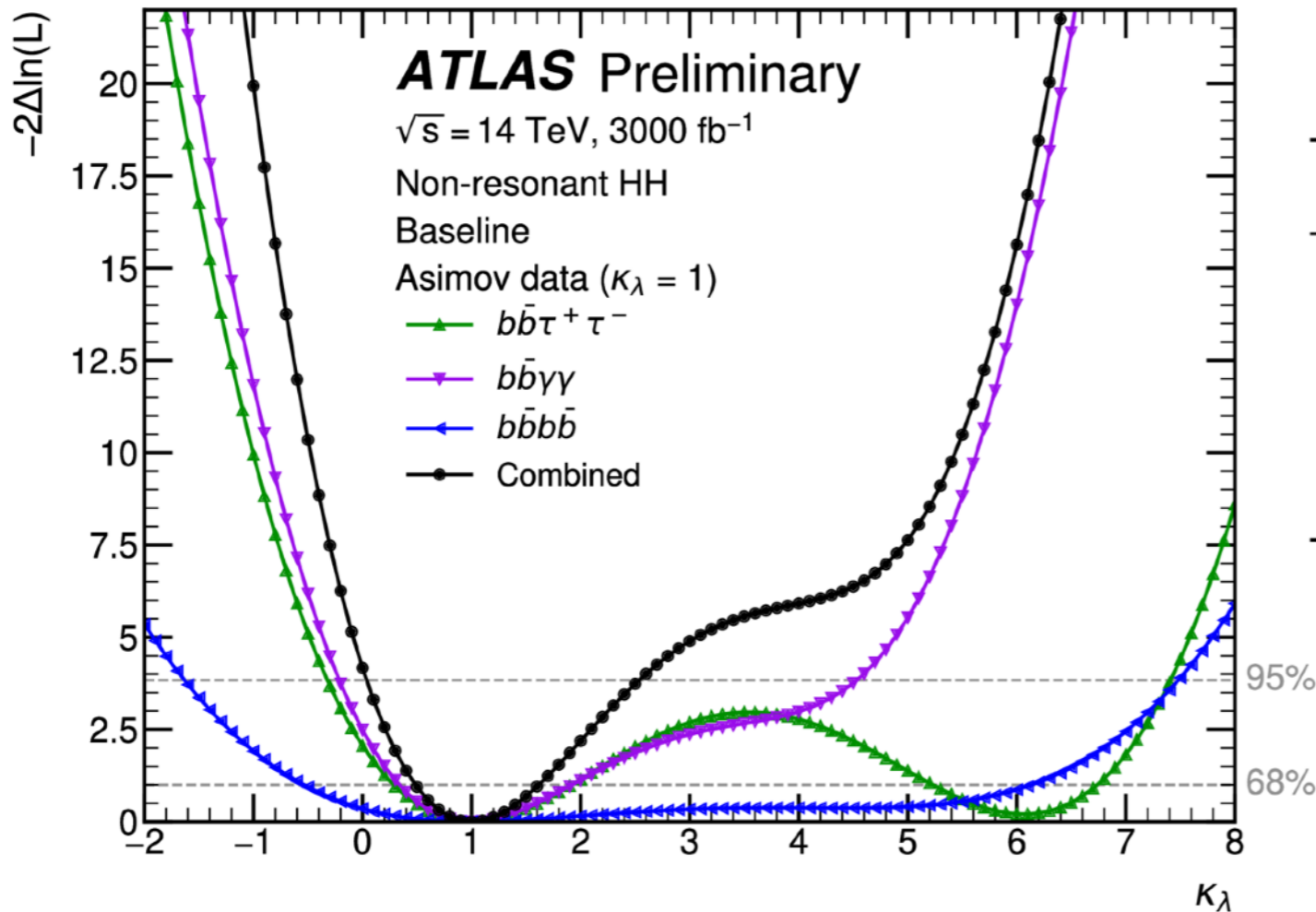
$\kappa_\lambda$

40

# Updated projections for HL-LHC

ATLAS-PHYS-PUB-2022-053

Uncertainty scenario	Significance [ $\sigma$ ]				Combined signal strength precision [%]
	$b\bar{b}\gamma\gamma$	$b\bar{b}\tau^+\tau^-$	$b\bar{b}b\bar{b}$	Combination	
No syst. unc.	2.3	4.0	1.8	4.9	-21/+22
Baseline	2.2	2.8	0.99	3.4	-30/+33
Theoretical unc. halved	1.1	1.7	0.65	2.1	-47/+48
Run 2 syst. unc.	1.1	1.5	0.65	1.9	-53/+65



Uncertainty scenario	$\kappa_\lambda$ 68% CI	$\kappa_\lambda$ 95% CI
No syst. unc.	[0.7, 1.4]	[0.3, 1.9]
Baseline	[0.5, 1.6]	[0.0, 2.5]
Theoretical unc. halved	[0.3, 2.2]	[-0.3, 5.5]
Run 2 syst. unc.	[0.1, 2.4]	[-0.6, 5.6]

Charting the Higgs potential with pair-production of Higgs bosons at the ATLAS experiment  
 CAP 2024 [27-31 Ma7 2024]

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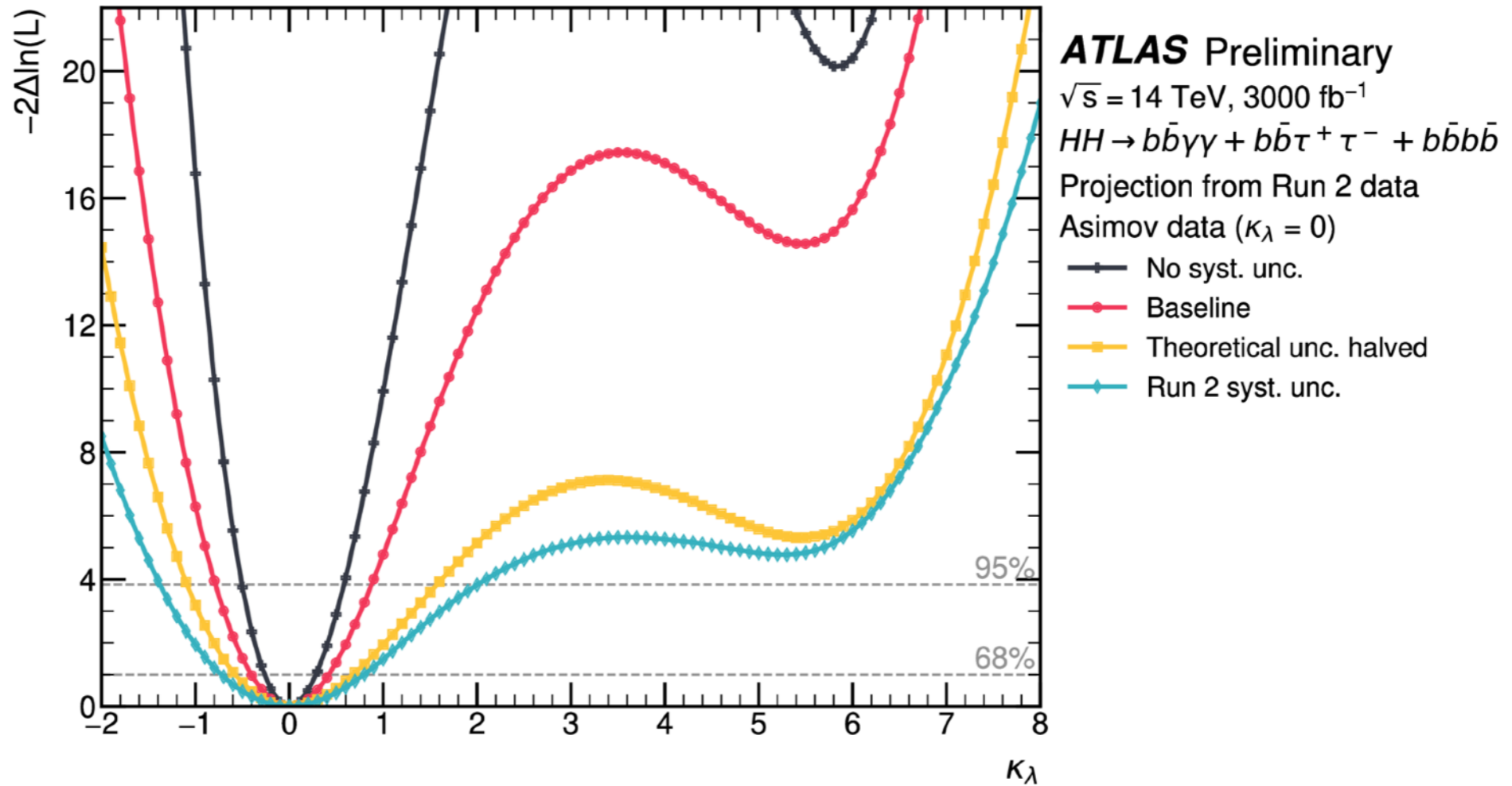


# Updated projections for HL-LHC

[ATLAS-PHYS-PUB-2022-053](#)

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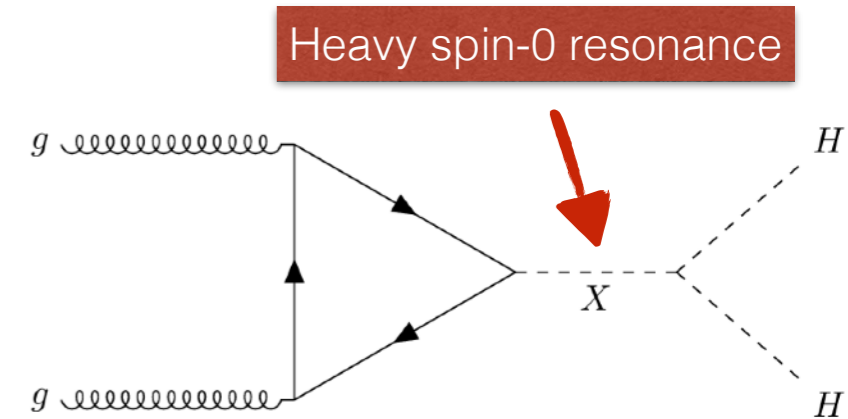


Uncertainty scenario	$\kappa_\lambda$ 68% CI	$\kappa_\lambda$ 95% CI
No syst. unc.	[-0.3, 0.3]	[-0.5, 0.6]
Baseline	[-0.4, 0.4]	[-0.8, 0.9]
Theoretical unc. halved	[-0.6, 0.7]	[-1.1, 1.6]
Run 2 syst. unc.	[-0.7, 0.8]	[-1.4, 2.0]

# Resonant interpretation

## Resonant upper limits

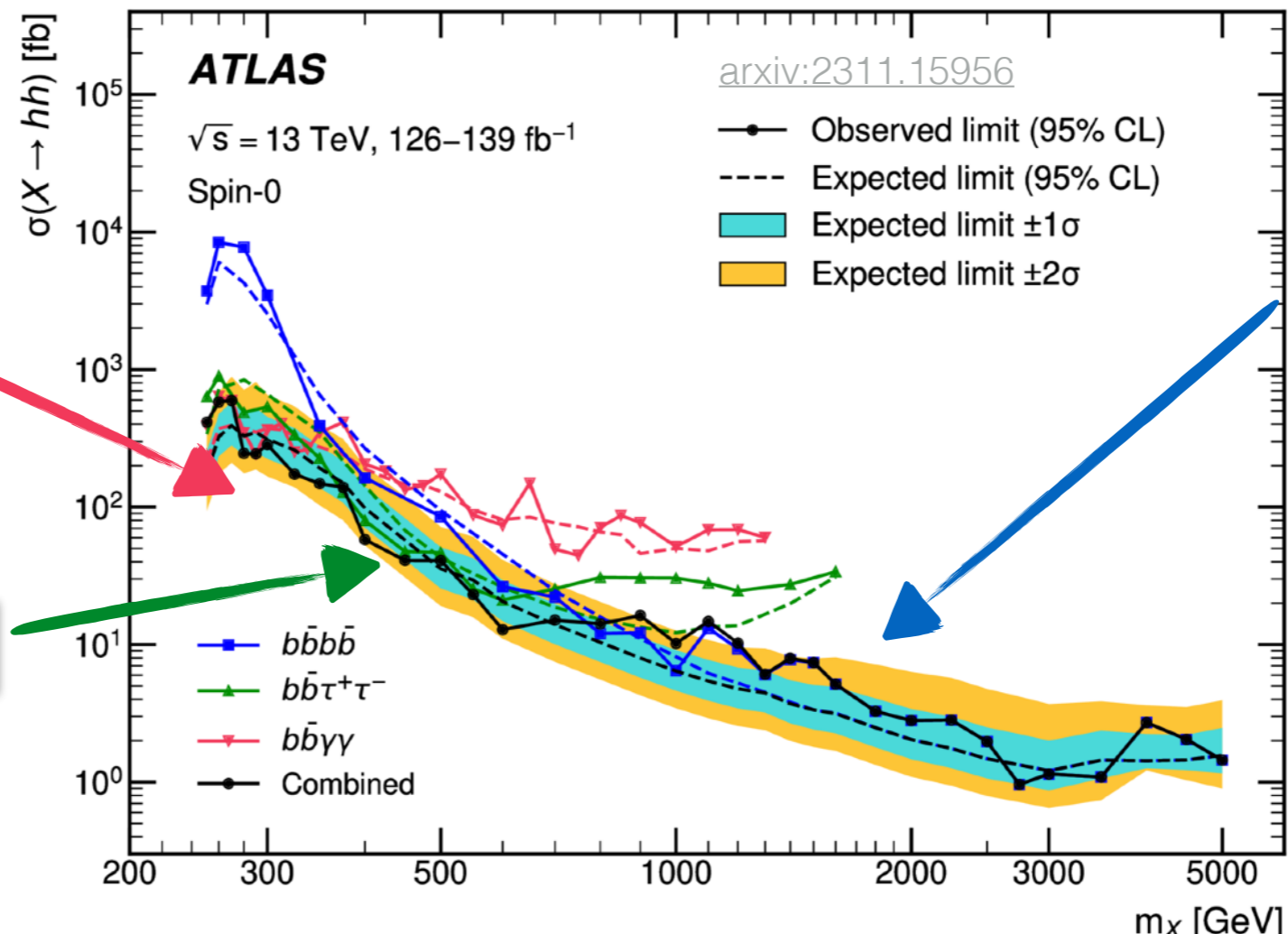
- BSM models also predict **possible heavy resonances decaying to HH**
  - Re-optimised analyses to target these scenarios.
- Complementarity between channels allow to obtain **optimal exclusion** across  $m_X$ .
- **No statistically significant excess** found: largest excess at  $m_X = 1.1$  TeV, with local (global) significance of  $3.2\sigma$  ( $2.1\sigma$ ).



$b\bar{b}\gamma\gamma$  dominated

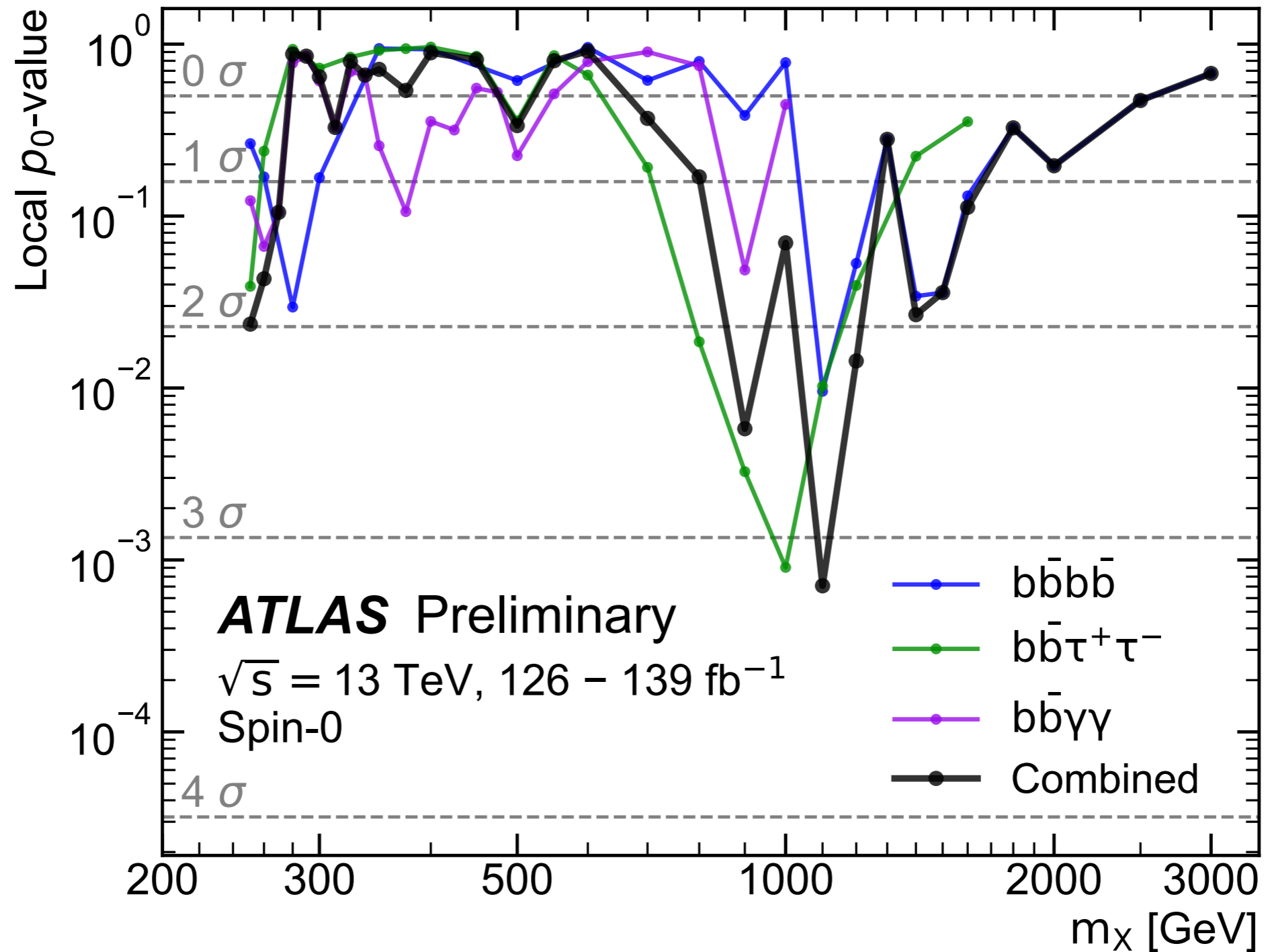
$b\bar{b}\tau\tau$  dominated

$b\bar{b}b\bar{b}$  dominated



# Combination p-value

Additional material (resonant)



Charting the Higgs potential with pair-production of Higgs bosons at the ATLAS experiment  
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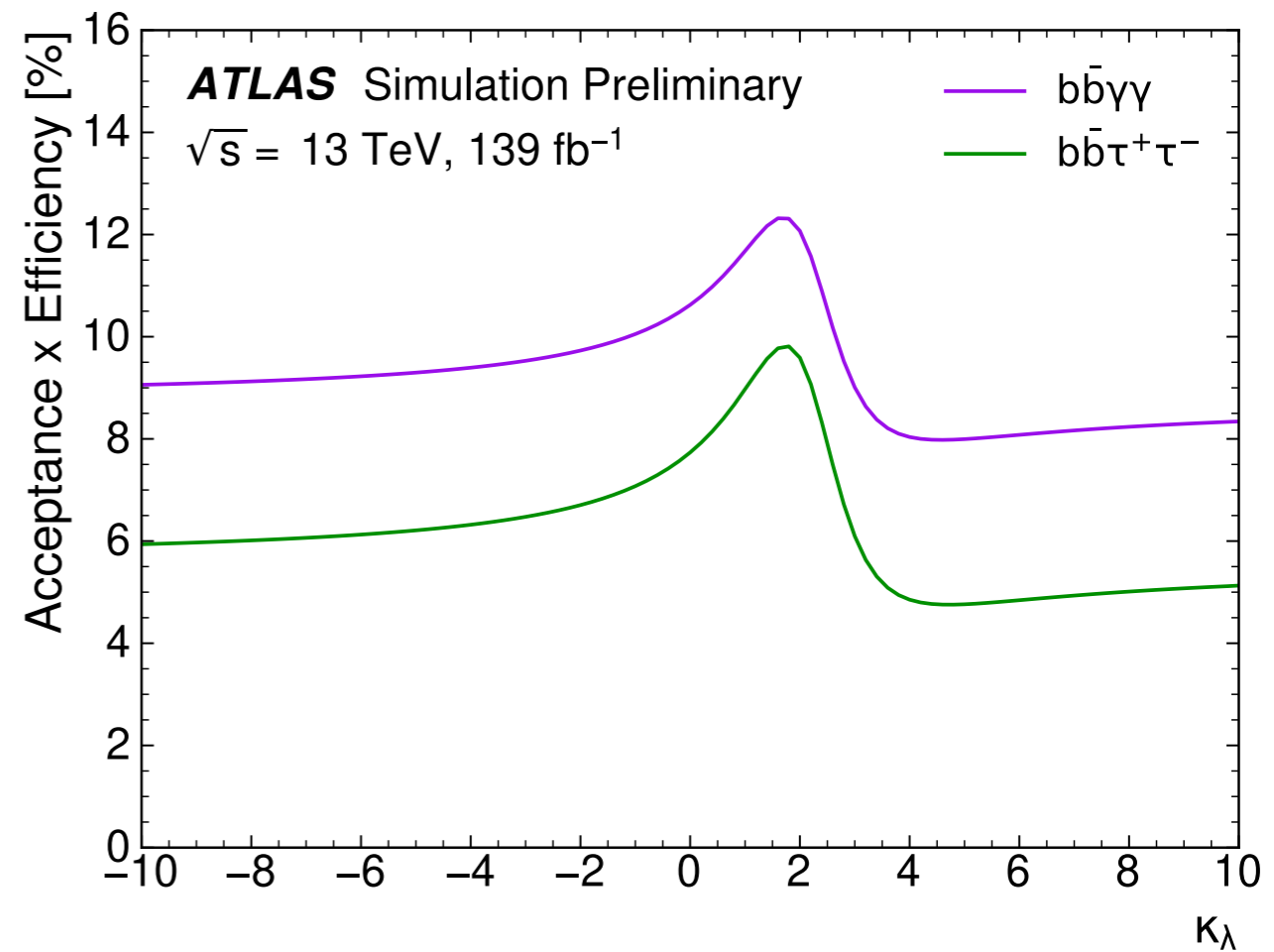
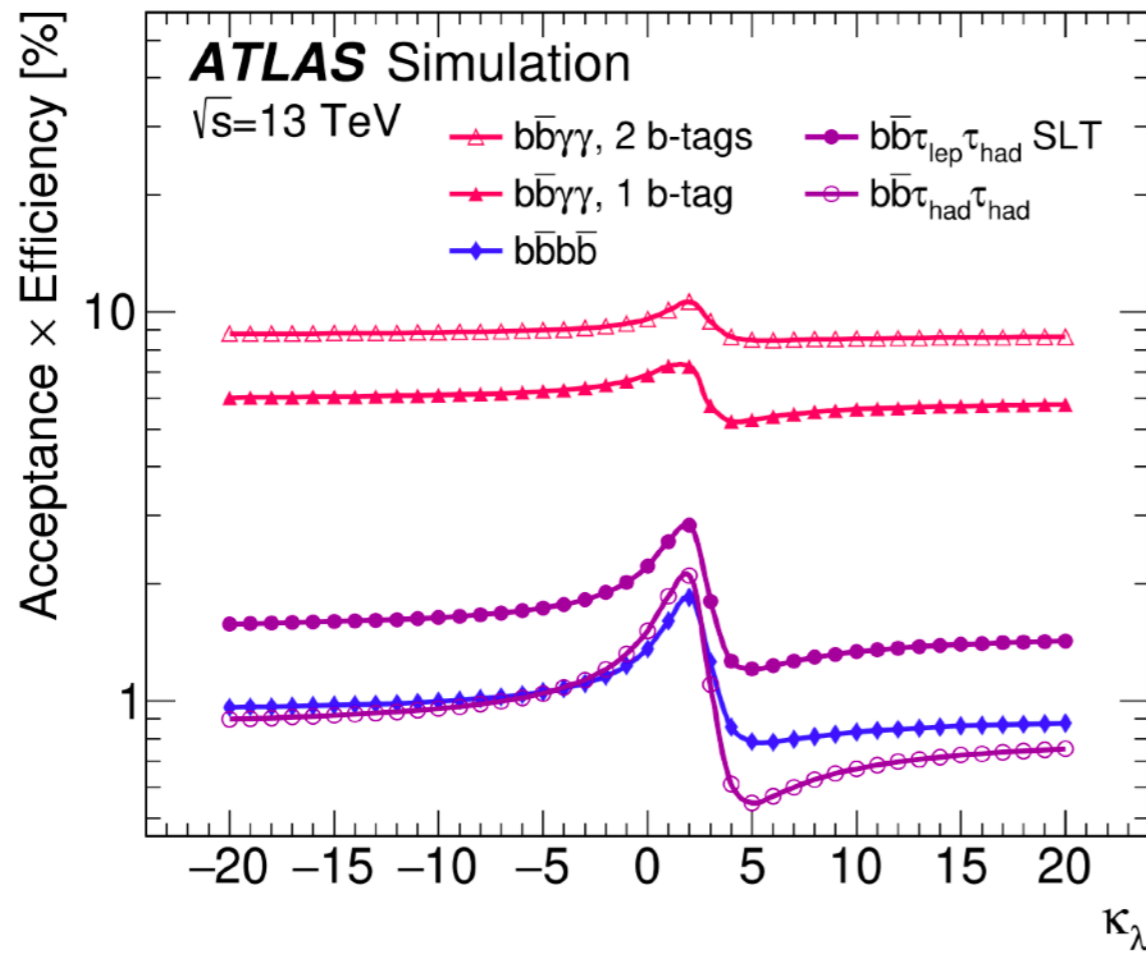
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# Combination acceptances vs $\kappa_\lambda$

Partial Run 2 combination ( $36 \text{ fb}^{-1}$ )

Full Run 2 combination



# $K_\lambda$ constraints at future colliders

[arxiv:2209.07510](https://arxiv.org/abs/2209.07510)

collider	Indirect- $h$	$hh$	combined
HL-LHC [77]	100-200%	50%	50%
ILC <sub>250</sub> /C <sup>3</sup> -250 [50, 51]	49%	–	49%
ILC <sub>500</sub> /C <sup>3</sup> -550 [50, 51]	38%	20%	20%
CLIC <sub>380</sub> [53]	50%	–	50%
CLIC <sub>1500</sub> [53]	49%	36%	29%
CLIC <sub>3000</sub> [53]	49%	9%	9%
FCC-ee [54]	33%	–	33%
FCC-ee (4 IPs) [54]	24%	–	24%
FCC-hh [78]	–	3.4-7.8%	3.4-7.8%
$\mu$ (3 TeV) [63]	–	15-30%	15-30%
$\mu$ (10 TeV) [63]	–	4%	4%

TABLE IX: Sensitivity at 68% probability on the Higgs cubic self-coupling at the various future colliders. Values for indirect extractions of the Higgs self-coupling from single Higgs determinations below the first line are taken from [2]. The values quoted here are combined with an independent determination of the self-coupling with uncertainty 50% from the HL-LHC.

